SWARTHMORE

College Bulletin

August 1995

Creating the "what if" world of children's books

All-American ...

Julie Noyes '95, here in action against Western Maryland, finished her three-year lacrosse career not only as the Centennial Conference Player of the Year but also as a first-team national All-American. Noyes holds the NCAA records for the most points in a season (125), most goals in a season (107), and most goals in a career (278). See page 11 for other spring sports highlights.

SWARTHMORE

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE

GIFT CATALOG 1995-1996

1. Herringbone Stripe Sweater • M-XL•$68.95 XXL•$72.95 We've taken one of our favorite looks-the vertical striped 100% cotton sweater-to a new level in this exciting style.The richly-colored stripes take on a new character when combined with a tasteful herringbone knit. Navy w/Atlantic, Mushroom, Blackberry.

2. The Victory Jacket • M-XL•$62.95, XXL•$66.95 Water-resistant 100% nylon taffeta adds a rich luster to the colored outershell. The contrasting fleece hood provides function and sporty style. Maroon.

3. Cotton Pique Polo Shirt • M-XL•$37.95, XXL•$39.95 Whether worn alone or under a favorite sweater or crew, you'll reach for this classic two-button placket polo again and again. Maroon.

4. Swarthmore Chair •$280.00 This traditional college armchair is available as shown (with cherry arms) or all black. Birch wood and gold striping with bronze powder. Also available with personalized brass plate on back at an additional charge.

5. Big Cotton® Tee • S-XL•$12.95, XXL$13.95 Made of 100% cotton and generously cut for comfort. Maroon.

6. Big Cotton® Tee • S-XL•$14.95, XXL$15.95 Made of 100% cotton and generously cut for comfort. Iced Heather.

7. Big Cotton® Crew •S-XL•$54.95, XXL•$56.95 Made of 80/20 combed cotton fabric specially designed to control shrinkage. with tackle twill lettering sewn on. Maroon.

8. Big Cotton® Crew • S-XL•$29.95, XXL•$31.95 This sweatshirt holds its fit wash after wash. Made from 80/20 combed cotton fabric. Iced Heather.

9. Youth Shirt • 18M, 2T, 4T •$10.95 6/8, 10/12, 14/16 $12.95 This 100% cotton tab collar t-shirt by Third Street Sportswear is perfect for Swarthmore students of the future. White w/ Garnet and Navy accents.

10. Youth Short •18M, 2T, 4T •$12.95 6/8, 10/12, 14/16•$14.95 Garnet/Navy reversible, micro-mesh shorts look great either way with tab collar t-shirt. 100% nylon.

11.Big Cotton® Crew • S-XL•$32.95, XXL•$34.95 This Big Cotton® crew is a winner for comfort and durability. Maroon.

12. Fleece Hood • S-XL•$42.95, XXL•$45.95 Unique zippered front adds surface detail, and striped rib knit trim at the waist and cuffs coordinates the look. Iced Heather w/Maroon.

13. Pro GEAR Crew • S-XL•$42.95, XXL•$44.95 GEAR's thickest 12 ounce cotton-rich fleece crew out-performs any competitor in the heavy-weight class. With thermal side panels. Iced Heather.

14. Big Cotton® Crew • S-XL•$32.95, XXL•$34.95 This sweatshirt holds its fit wash after wash. Made from 80/20 combed cotton fabric. Navy.

15. Ball Cap •$19.95• Caps are now a fashion statement and we carry several styles. Made from -75% wool, 20% nylon, 5% other fibers. Embroidered Garnet cap w/Navy trim.

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COLLEGE BULLETIN • AUGUST 1995

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Contacting Swarthmore College:
College Operator: (610) 328-8000
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Publications: (610) 328-8568
E-mail: bulletin@swarthmore.edu
Registrar: (610) 328-8297

Printed in U.S.A. on recycled paper.

The Swarthmore College Bulletin (ISSN 0888-2126), of which this is volume XCII, number 5, is published in September, November, January, February, May, and August by Swarthmore College, 500 College Avenue, Swarthmore PA 19081-1397. Second class postage paid at Swarthmore PA and additional mailing offices. Permit No. 0530-620. Postmaster: Send address changes to Swarthmore College Bulletin, 500 College Avenue, Swarthmore PA 19081-1397.

12 The Conjurers

Anyone who has held a child and read a story aloud knows the power of words and pictures. Meet five Swarthmore authors of picture books and novels, fiction and nonfiction, who have made their way in the difficult business of children's publishing.

By Rebecca Alm

16 I'll Build My House of Straw

In a yearlong effort, engineering students under the tutelage of Assistant Professor Carr Everbach constructed a house made of straw bales. The goal was not just to build a house but to "learn how to live while doing minimal damage to the environment."

By Carol Brévart

20 Old Bugs, New Tricks

At Temple University Bennett Lorber '64 is chief of infectious diseases, "the purest detective work in all of medicine." He and his team worry about new diseases, the reappearance of old ones, and the evolution of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

By Marcia Ringel

72 Letting Go

"Toward mid-August I began to unravel. I began telling store clerks and gas station attendants, 'My son is going to college.'" The mother of Charlie Mayer '98 shares the lump-in-the-throat feeling that accompanied their car ride to Swarthmore last fall.

By Donna Damico Mayer

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56 Recent Books by Alumni

PARLOR TALK

Reading is the start of an independent life.

It's been a long time since I hid under my blanket with a flashlight to finish a Hardy Boys book, but I still have the passion for reading that drove me to disobey my parents' order to "go to bed." But Mom, there was a mystery to be solved with my buddies Frank and Joe. I couldn't leave them alone in the secret cave, could I?

I don't remember learning to read. It's so natural, like walking or talking, that I feel I've always known how. Of course I realize from raising two children that such skills are learned. As our babies sat in our laps, pointing to the pictures in *Pat the Bunny* or memorizing another Richard Scarry book, they were already learning to name things and to sequence simple stories. By the time they got on the bus to first grade, their minds were filled with favorite tales, and they were ready to read by themselves. First steps and first words may be the triumphs of the toddler years, but reading is truly the start of an independent life.

Of course we can't start with Whitman or Steinbeck or Annie Dillard—so we begin with children's books. If you've ever tried to write one, you know it takes a special gift to shed the weight of adulthood and enter the mind of a child. That's why I'm in awe of authors from my youth like E.B. White and A.A. Milne. In "The Conjurers" (page 12), you'll meet five Swarthmore authors who continue to add to this important genre.

When you think about it, magazines are a lot like children's books—stories with pictures, pages filled with flights of fancy or bits of information meant to surprise and delight. For instance, can you imagine actually building a house of straw? We watched it happen this year at the College, and, being in a storybook mood, we couldn't resist some Three-Little-Pigs wordplay. But in "I'll Build My House of Straw" (page 16), you'll also find a serious side to this unusual environmental engineering project.

Perhaps the real wolves at our door in the 1990s are new (and not so new) bacteria and viruses. There are some blow-your-house-down illnesses out there, so we had a talk with infectious disease specialist Bennett Lorber '64 in "Old Bugs, New Tricks" (page 20). Dr. Lorber's humane approach to medicine is reassuring, but his perception of the public health is not. Sometimes the real world makes me want to retreat into fiction.

But with its news and notes, its facts and flights of fancy, we hope you find each issue of the *Swarthmore College Bulletin* a reader's refuge. So curl up in your secret cave and get started, but don't let your mom catch you with the light on!

—*J.L.*

LET

Still having mailbox dreams?

To the Editor:

As I was walking with my 7-year-old daughter in Parrish Hall during Alumni Weekend, we passed the mailboxes. Pointing them out to her, I said, "Rachel, see those mailboxes? I have dreams about those mailboxes." Four people nearby—including my husband Tony '75—whirled around and said, "You do too?" So it turns out that I'm not the only one who dreams that I have forgotten the combination to my mailbox, which is stuffed full of extremely important items, like exams, notification of papers due, etc. And I won't be able to graduate unless I can get in there!

We shared other Swarthmore anxiety dreams we had, like the one where you're ready to graduate but you've just found out that you owe two papers and an exam in a class you didn't know you were registered for. I don't think that one is specifically Swarthmore, though. Any others?

SHELLIE WILENSKY CAMP '75
Gulph Mills, Pa.

An unfortunate stereotype

To the Editor:

In the article on immigration ("Crossing the Line," May 1995) you quote Alex Aleinikoff '74 of the INS as saying, "about half ... [of undocumented immigrants] are 'overstayers,' people who enter lawfully but don't go home." Yet the photographs you chose to accompany the story focused only on the other half: a short, dark-haired man sneaks through a fence, a dark-eyed woman clutches a small child. It's interesting that you didn't show any Canadian graduate students or Italian tourists to illustrate Aleinikoff's point.

The media have been irresponsible in the images they use to illustrate this issue, and it's unfortunate that the *College Bulletin* chose the same easy way out.

ELISE RICHER '92
Cambridge, Mass.

Your point is well-taken. We liked Ken Light's photographs as works of art but did not fully consider their editorial implications.

T E R S

Recognize diversity, but honor the common culture

To the Editor:

Your May editorial ("Parlor Talk") asserts that "the idea of the melting pot has been discredited" and that there are definite limits to assimilation. We'd all better hope that neither of these assertions is true and that some form of modified melting pot prevails.

If our common culture is increasingly irrelevant, what are the compelling interests keeping the "culture war" that you describe from degenerating into violent tribal warfare? It's disingenuous to express surprise when deliberately sensitized group differences escalate into physical conflict.

If all the multicultural energy spent on expanding group consciousness had instead been spent on expanding the common culture and assimilating new immigrants, I doubt whether the xenophobia of which you speak would have reached its current dangerous proportions. I lived in Ireland from 1967 to 1981 and witnessed the bloody results of stressing group differences. After a bomb killed 18 people outside my office building, the Irish media shrilled the usual pathetically inadequate cries for "tolerance," having done their part (as the American media do here) to foster tribalism and lay the groundwork for such a catastrophe.

If "diversity" consciousness and its related dynamics really catch on in America, then the results will make events in the former Yugoslavia look like child's play. The bumper sticker slogan "Honor Diversity" has got it backwards. We should recognize diversity, but what we should honor are those elements of our culture that unify us and bind us together.

TOM GREEN
Lake Oswego, Ore.

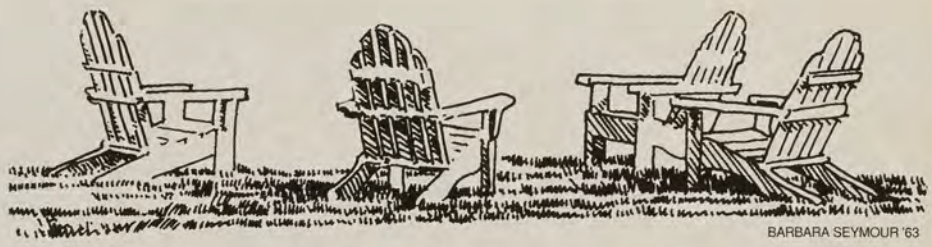
Very passionate about Bach

To the Editor:

What is this ridiculous protest of Jewish students against the Bach *St. John Passion*? ("Passionate About Bach," May 1995) That their protest

Please turn to page 62

POSTINGS



BARBARA SEYMOUR '63

My mom keeps a collection of small mementos in her kitchen window as reminders of special people and places in her life. Recently she told me that she saw a miniature Adirondack chair, which she wanted to buy because it reminded her of me at Swarthmore. I laughed, at first because it seemed absurd and then because I realized that those chairs do embody all that is wonderful about the College.

My mother probably has the mistaken notion that my friends and I frequent Parrish lawn, whiling away the hours discussing Plato and Shakespeare. But I have never managed to have an academic conversation in an Adirondack chair.

I too entertained dreams of lazy spring and autumn days, all my work done, reclining in those sturdy Adirondacks with my best friends in the world, discussing the meaning of life. That, of course, was before I realized that work at Swarthmore is never actually "done" and that there is no such thing as a "lazy day" here. So my fantasy was a little overindulgent, though I have learned that it's impossible to stay awake in those chairs on a sunny Thursday afternoon in October.

The Adirondack chairs embody all that is wonderful about Swarthmore.

I did once eavesdrop on two women reading Shakespeare to each other, but that was different—it was for fun, not for school. I sometimes wonder about those conversations of which I was never a part, the ones that leave all the chairs corralled together in a circle, or just two of them pressed face-to-face with no space in between.

But it is the lone, independent Adirondack halfway down the lawn that is mine. My first year here, I escaped dorm life by wallowing alone under the pinkish Philly night sky, noting that there are thousands more stars back home in Iowa. Sometimes the chairs embraced my happiness, but more often they comforted me as I wondered why the world hadn't fallen apart yet. They were almost as good as a hug, although the arms didn't reach around quite far enough to encircle me. Other than that, though, the chairs are the perfect shape. I love the fact that it is physically impossible to sit up straight in them. They are the only things at Swarthmore that are directly conducive to relaxation.

My first winter here, I was homesick and exasperated with the omnipresent layer of ice coating every surface. Parrish lawn was incredibly lonely with the chairs locked up in Tarble for their own protection from the elements. (I was told that the chairs aren't let out of their cage until after April Fools' Day because of a past prank that left them mysteriously up in trees. Of course, no one knows how they could have gotten there, since no student would dare break the College's no-tree-climbing rule.) When they were finally let loose on the lawn in the spring, they were soon taken completely for granted—as if they had always been there, hidden under the snow.

My mom never purchased the miniature chair, probably because I laughed at her for even considering the thought. But a tiny, white Adirondack in my mom's kitchen window couldn't possibly convey the comfort of the real thing.

—Amy Diehl '97

COMMENCEMENT PHOTOS BY STEVEN GOLDBLATT '67

Charged to become purveyors of optimism, the Class of 1995 departs Swarthmore

The knowledge and the experience you have acquired at Swarthmore should persuade you to be purveyors of optimism about intellectual and societal goals that can be achieved," President Alfred Bloom told the graduating seniors at the College's 123rd Commencement.

"The more you sincerely and unashamedly communicate that optimism, the more it will radiate to and influence others, just as will your devotion to the life of the mind, your confidence in the power of ideas, and your commitment to creating a better world."

President Bloom presided over the ceremonies, awarding 307 bachelor of arts degrees, 21 bachelor of science degrees, and four honorary degrees.

Bill Cosby: "You're going to have to listen to old people now."

Honorary degree recipients included entertainer Bill Cosby, who received the Doctor of Humane Letters degree; economist Heidi Hartmann '67, who was awarded the Doctor of Law degree; social psychologist Dorwin P. Cartwright '37, who received the Doctor of Law degree; and Barbara Weiss Cartwright '37, who also received the Doctor of Law degree.

In related Commencement activities, Robert E. Savage, the Isaac H. Clothier Jr. Professor Emeritus of Biology, delivered the Baccalaureate address. Bob Gross '62, associate dean of the College, spoke at Last Collection (see page 8 for his edited remarks). Following are excerpts from honorary degree recipients' charges to the seniors.

Bill Cosby *is an internationally recognized actor, director, author, and educator. He and his wife, Camille, have given more than $40 million in philanthropic support to historically black institutions.*

"Graduation is great because it's walking out into wisdom. You're going to have to listen to old people now and not get a grade. I don't care if you graduate 4.0, this is the time where you're going to get coffee for somebody. You're going to have to respect people regardless of what they look like. I'm not talking about the color or what the hair is, I'm talking about sweat on a shirt and the smell of oil. These people have wisdom and can help you cut corners.

"My father, for instance, was a man who smelled like a foundry when he came home. And while I was at Temple University studying and gaining knowledge in leaps and bounds, I felt that I was highly educated and he wasn't. I didn't challenge him—I just wanted him to hear how bright I was. I said to him one day, 'Dad, we had a wonderful discussion in class today. Is the glass half full or half empty?' And my father said, 'It depends on if you're drinking or pouring.'"

Heidi Hartmann '67 *led the effort to found the Institute for Women's Policy Research in Washington, D.C., which conducts research on such issues as family needs of workers, the pay gap between men and women, welfare reform, and poverty.*

"Public policies to support the work of women outside the home, to support the new types of families that are coming into being—more egalitarian families, single-parent families, same-sex families—are almost entirely lacking. We now need a new public and private infrastructure to create new ways of supporting children, individuals, and families. Your generation will, I believe, set the direction for decades to come.

"You can now choose to continue this risky adventure toward a better future, shaping it to meet your needs. As you choose, please remember that your college education, your Swarthmore degree, is very valuable. It opens up the possibility of a choice of occupations and gives you the freedom to find satisfying work.

"So I urge you to use your freedom, to find work that challenges you and that helps those who have not had the good fortune to receive a degree like the one you receive today. Do not settle for less than you want. Serve coffee but go on beyond that. You have a very long life ahead of you, and the time you take now to explore and take risks will almost certainly not be wasted in the long run."

Dorwin P. Cartwright '37, *known as the "grandfather of group dynamics," has been nationally recognized for his leadership and devotion to the development of social psychology.*

"Today I am grateful to the College for having launched me on a rewarding career, and I am especially indebted to its founders because, had they not decided to educate woman and man together, Barbara Weiss and I would not be here today as husband and wife, and there's no telling who the parents of our children might be.

"Edward Magill's vision that Swarthmore's basic purpose would be to prepare young men and women 'to use to best advantage the talents with which they are endowed' has remained paramount. Over the years Swarthmore alumni have found innumerable ways to employ their diverse talents, and the world is undoubtedly a much better place because Swarthmore has been here."

Barbara Weiss Cartwright '37 *has devoted her life to social activism, tirelessly advocating peace, criminal justice reform, and public service across the country.*

"From its beginnings Swarthmore has reflected, in many ways, the importance it gives to ethical values. Paramount among these values are the intrinsic worth of each human being and personal responsibility for the welfare of others. These have been the guiding principles for work I have done with people caught up in the criminal justice system at various states of involvement—from pretrial hearings to life imprisonment. I have become increasingly troubled by the realization that, once these people are in the system, they cease to be treated as individuals who have aspirations, anxieties, frustrations, and all other human feelings.

"The inadequacy of our criminal justice system is but one example of society's need for ethical intelligence. As your life unfolds, you will encounter many opportunities where a person with the intellectual skills and ethical sensitivity of a Swarthmore graduate can contribute significantly to the betterment of the world."

President Alfred H. Bloom bestows honorary degrees upon economist and 1994 MacArthur Fellow Heidi Hartmann '67 (top), social activist Barbara Weiss Cartwright '37, and social psychologist Dorwin P. Cartwright '37.

COLLECTION

An ability to flourish with others in the light

"Our time at Swarthmore has fostered a desire and ability to flourish with others in the light, as well as to be comfortable within the darkness. The uniqueness of our education, then, is in part due to the time spent maturing in the cave, as we have acquired important skills that facilitated our emergence into the light. But more importantly, it has inspired us not to resign after the completion of this rite of passage but to seek new challenges and strive for emotional and intellectual fulfillment."

—Senior Class Speaker Laura Golub

STEVEN GOLDBLATT '67

Students claim a host of post- and undergraduate honors

A remarkable number of fellowships and grants were awarded to Swarthmoreans at the end of the 1994–95 academic year, sending recent graduates for further study here and abroad as well as helping undergraduates with financial aid. And the winners are:

Marshall Scholarship to Rajesh Vedanthan '95. Awarded by the British government to American students, the scholarship covers all costs associated with attending a British university. Vendanthan will attend Magdalen College at Oxford to study human sciences, a blend of human biology and social sciences.

Fulbright grants for higher study in the country and program of the candidate's choice to MaryCatherine Arbour '95, agriculture in Chile; Benjamin Le Cook '95, teaching assistant in Korea; Amy Hammock '95, women's studies in Mexico; Youngjae Lee '95, philosophy in Korea; Nader Vossoughian '95, political science in Germany; and Nicole Jassie '95, women's literature in the Ivory Coast.

Andrew W. Mellon Fellowships to Ryan Bush '95, linguistics, and Joanne M. Seo '95, classical languages. Given to college seniors and recent graduates "of outstanding promise," the fellowships encourage and assist them in joining humanities faculties of American colleges and universities.

National Science Foundation Grants to Matthew Lee Peck '95, molecular biology; Helene Clara Muller-Landau '95, ecology; Betsy Ruth Kreuter '87, linguistics; Rachel Rue '80, mathematics; Jean I. Tsao '93, ecology; and Katharine Estelle Winkler '93, molecular biology.

Wallenberg Scholarship to Nami Ando '95 for 11 months of graduate study at Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Harry S. Truman Scholarships to Rebeccah Bennett '96 and Russell Stark '95. The awards of up to $30,000 are given to college juniors who have extensive records in community service, outstanding leadership potential, are committed to careers in public service, possess intellectual strength and analytical abilities, and wish to attend graduate school to help prepare for their careers.

Goldwater Scholarship to Sydney Foster '97. The federally endowed scholarship covers college costs of up to $7,000 per year. Winners are selected on the basis of academic merit from a field of more than 1,300 mathematics, science, and engineering students nominated by colleges and universities nationwide.

Thomas J. Watson Fellowship to Allison Gill '95 for her project "Nation Building: People and Politics" focusing on current developments among Russians and Palestinians. Her travels will take her to Siberia and Israel.

Mellon Minority Undergraduate Fellowships to Jenny Diaz '96, Octavio Gonzalez '97, Joel Johnson '96, Anam Owili-Eger '96, and Christine Rose '97.

Rockefeller Brothers Fund Fellowships to Alison McKenzie '96 and Tanya Wiggins '96. Fellows receive a summer stipend to carry out an education-related project and receive support for graduate study in education with the understanding that they will go on to teach in public schools.

Gold Congressional Award to Gypsyamber Berg-Cross '96. An honor bestowed by the U.S. Congress, the award is granted to young people who have achieved individually challenging goals in four program areas: voluntary public service, personal development, physical fitness, and expedition/exploration.

JEFFREY LOTT

Not your average motorcycle ... Newly graduated engineer Paul Anschel did what none of his colleagues did Commencement morning—arrive on his senior research project. Anschel designed and built his motorcycle to run on five 12-volt deep-cycle batteries, which store enough energy to ride about 30–40 miles before recharging. "A lot of research has been going on for electric cars, but not for bikes," he said. "The advantage is that they don't require as much power." Anschel, who is working this summer to perfect his machine, will begin a master's degree in mechanical engineering at Colorado State University in the fall.

New vice president for finance and registrar join the staff

Two key College administrative positions have been filled with the naming of Paul J. Aslanian as vice president for finance and planning and Martin O. Warner as registrar. Aslanian, a former economics professor and a certified public accountant who served as treasurer of Macalester College in St. Paul, Minn., for more than 20 years, replaces William Spock '51 who retired in June.

New VP Paul Aslanian

New registrar Martin Warner

After earning a B.A. and an M.B.A. from the University of Washington, he joined Touche, Ross & Company as a staff accountant and then the Boeing Company as a senior systems analyst. In 1967 he accepted a position as assistant professor of economics at Macalester, then spent several years teaching at Western Washington State University before returning to Macalester as treasurer.

While at Macalester, Aslanian oversaw an increase in the college's endowment from $13 million to nearly $500 million.

Warner, who for the past six years has been assistant registrar at Duke University, replaces Jane Hooper Mullins '50, who also retired in June. Warner graduated with highest distinction and Phi Beta Kappa from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1986. He also holds an M.A. in liberal studies from Duke.

Among his accomplishments at Duke, Warner coordinated the development of a consistent transfer credit policy and helped produce a comprehensive five-year plan for the Registrar's Office. He served on a subcommittee of Duke's curriculum committee and provided academic advising to first- and second-year students.

Phi Psi alumni save the day—and the house

Phi Psi fraternity, deeply in debt to the College for delinquent utility and maintenance bills for its house, has staved off eviction thanks to donations from many of its former members.

Fundraising efforts began last year when the chapter created a newsletter, followed up with a successful phonathon, and during Alumni Weekend formed a Phi Psi Alumni Advisory Council. The Council, headed by Paul Chi '95, has taken on the responsibility for raising the remainder of money to retire the balance of the debt by Sept. 15.

"Ultimately, the council will take financial responsibility of the fraternity in relation to the College," Chi said. The plan is to raise 75 percent of annual fees and expenses charged by the College from Phi Psi alumni and 50 percent from current student members. The 25 percent differential will go toward building a permanent endowment for the fraternity.

Once the debt is retired, the College will begin renovating the house in the summer of 1996.

DENG-JENG LEE

The construction of Kohlberg Hall, *seen here from Parrish Hall, remains on schedule for opening in January. A sundial will grace the four-story tower in the foreground. Last month work was begun to regrade the lawn in front of Trotter Hall and to underpin its stone walls in preparation for the next phase of the north campus project. When Kohlberg Hall is occupied, Trotter will close for a complete renovation, reopening in September 1997.*

Hitting the wall ... or Gross' Law revealed

Sometime during the four years at Swarthmore, everyone hits the wall. The wall can come earlier or later and sometimes more than once; it may be low and thin, or high and thick. But everyone hits it. How we get over it, under it, or through it in a large sense determines the meaning and quality of our experience at the College.

I think we construct the wall when our sense of self collides with the expectations of others. The wall prevents us from making progress down our path, but it also protects us from dangers that may lurk around the bend. Another way of looking at it is that the wall arises from the collision of self-esteem and excellence.

The French poet Paul Valéry wrote that all theory is autobiography. So let me tell you a story from long ago of when I hit the wall.

I came here as a sophomore transfer, looking for greater intellectual challenge, less of the rah-rah New England collegiate life, and, frankly, a coed school. (These were very different times, you must understand.) Since I had done rather well my freshman year without breaking much of an academic sweat, I thought college was no big deal. I was fairly oblivious to Swarthmore's much ballyhooed academic pressure, so I sailed fairly successfully through four semesters. And then, in the fall of my senior year, came the Modern Comp Lit seminar.

STEVEN GOLDBLATT '67

Bob Gross '62 received both an M.A.T. and an Ed.D. from Harvard, and more recently an M.S.S. from Bryn Mawr. He is now associate dean of the College. This essay is adapted from his talk at this year's Last Collection.

Professor George Becker could not have been nicer—and the other six students, too, many of them my close friends. But I had never realized how smart they were! As the weeks went by, their erudition seemed to become more and more evident, and so too, it seemed to me, did my obtuseness. By late fall I knew I was approaching a crisis. Every paper required at least one all-nighter. By the time January rolled around (in those days the fall semester ended in late January), my review paper was due. The topic, appropriately enough, was "Alienation in the Modern Novel." With the shades of my brilliant seminarmates sitting on my shoulder, the paper just wasn't coming, even with the all-nighters. So I did what any self-disrespecting Swattie would do—I asked for an extension.

At the same time the Comp Lit crisis was looming, I was trying to figure out what I wanted to be when I grew up. Grad school applications were due, and I was wrestling between a Ph.D. in English or an M.A.T. so I could be a high school teacher. I began to feel even more alienated from my paper on alienation. I was avoiding my friends, and I was getting to the point where I knew I needed help. So I went into Philly to see my family physician, Dr. Epstein. Oddly enough I told him that the reason I came to see him was that I wasn't sleeping well, and I wanted him to prescribe some stimulants so that I could stay up late and write my paper. He smiled and scribbled something on his pad. "Here," he said, "I'm giving you a prescription for sleeping pills, and I want you to take a week off and go to Florida. I'll write the dean a note and tell him it's medically necessary." But what about my review paper, I asked. I remember him saying, "What's the big deal? It's only a paper."

I never got the sleeping pills, and I never went to Florida, but I felt very liberated by this conversation. "What's the big deal?" Somehow that phrase, trite and trivial as it was, got me over my wall. I was able to work again, and I wrote some pretty good stuff that spring. It started to be fun again.

So what does this story tell us about hitting the wall, about Swarthmore, about life? The psychologist Nevitt Sanford wrote that a successful college experience requires the right balance of challenge and support, or in the terms I used earlier, of expectations of excellence and the internal support provided by self-esteem. Without the expectation of excellence, one's potential achievement inevitably remains unrealized. And yet without a sense of worthwhileness, one cannot make the effort required to achieve excellence.

When external expectations of excellence become internal demons, our capacity to realistically appraise our efforts goes out the window. The way out of this bind—easy to say but awfully hard to achieve—is to have a sense of perspective. Swarthmoreans can be terribly narcissistic. It is too easy to see our hermetically sealed academic oasis as the center of the universe, to see this moment in time as isolated from the past and the future. No wonder, then, that the next paper, even the next sentence, becomes grotesquely important. We lose the capacity to say, with Dr. Epstein, "What's the big deal?"

A sense of perspective begins to provide the answer to the problem of evaluation and judgment that lies at the heart of the apparent conflict between excellence and self-esteem. During the past week, it seems that a lot of judgments have been flying around: grades, Honors, Distinction, Phi Beta Kappa, and so forth. This is slightly unsettling, and it reminds us that what makes the intensity of Swarthmore tolerable is the relative lack of competitiveness. But the judgments are there, and the sad thing is our tendency to internalize the negative and reject the positive. My antidote to this is what I have come to call Gross' Law of Personal Assessment: Whenever there is a discrepancy between the way you value yourself and the way others value you, always go with the higher.

Morgan, Peabody, Savage, and Thompson retire

DENG-JENG LEE

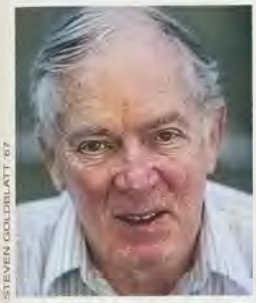
KATHRYN MORGAN

Four members of the faculty retired at the end of the academic year: Kathryn Morgan, the Sara Lawrence Lightfoot Professor of History; Dean Peabody '49, professor of psychology; Robert E. Savage, the Isaac H. Clothier Jr. Professor of Biology; and Peter T. Thompson, professor of chemistry. All four have been granted emeritus status.

Professor Morgan, a specialist in black studies and folklore—particularly the oral tradition of African American families—joined the Swarthmore faculty shortly after receiving a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in 1970.

She has been the recipient of many fellowships and research grants from such organizations as the Smithsonian Institution, the American Philosophical Society, and the Danforth Foundation. She is the author of numerous articles and the book *Children of Strangers*, a collection of legends passed on through six generations of her family.

In 1991 the Black Alumni Association established an award in her honor for her "significant contributions to the lives of African American students at the College" and named her the first recipient.



STEVEN GOLDBLATT '67

DEAN PEABODY '49

Professor Peabody, who graduated from Swarthmore in 1949 with high honors, began graduate studies at Harvard University before working with refugee relief agencies in Germany and France for several years. He returned to study at Harvard and completed a Ph.D. in social psychology in 1954. Professor Peabody joined the Swarthmore faculty in 1961. His research has concentrated on the relations between personality characteristics and the personality traits of members of different nationalities.

Professor Savage, a cell biologist considered the "father of modern biology" at the College, has been a member of the faculty for 28 years.

STEVEN GOLDBLATT '67

ROBERT SAVAGE

A graduate of Oberlin College, he received an M.S. and Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin. Prior to joining the Swarthmore faculty, Savage taught at Queens College in New York City.

In April a "Bobfest" was held on campus in his honor, with 64 former students returning for a dinner and a day-long program of research papers and a performance of classical music.

Professor Thompson joined the faculty in 1958 as an instructor in chemistry. He has an A.B. from Johns Hopkins University and a Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh, where he worked as an instructor and research associate before coming to Swarthmore.

Thompson, whose research has centered on the properties of aqueous solutions, was a National Science Foundation Faculty Fellow at Cambridge University and a visiting scientist with the Center for Chemical Physics of the National Bureau of Standards. He has held visiting research appointments at the University of Delaware for many years.

STEVEN GOLDBLATT '67

PETER THOMPSON

On June 2 a symposium in his honor was held at the College during Alumni Weekend, at which 10 of his former students presented papers on "The Diversity of Physical Chemistry."

Not bamboozled ... Swarthmore College was not among Philadelphia-area colleges and universities left in the financial lurch with the bankruptcy of the Foundation for the New Era Philanthropy. New Era accepted investments from nonprofit organizations and held the money for at least six months, promising to double the money after that. Investors were told that the money would be matched by an anonymous group of donors—which didn't exist. Swarthmore raised more than $25 million in the 1994–95 fiscal year without any "help" from New Era.

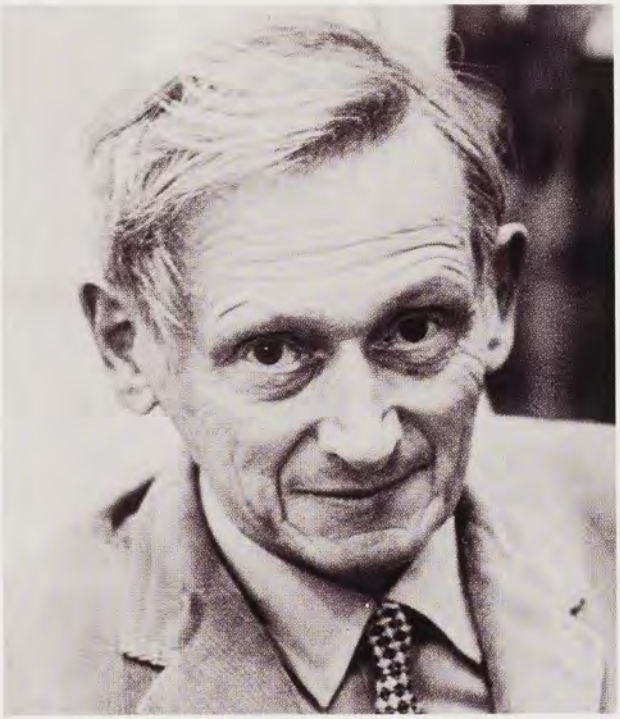
Calling all E-mailers ... Alumni can now correspond with each other via E-mail—even when you don't know the exact address of the addressee. A new feature added to the College's computer network acts as an electronic postmaster, forwarding E-mail to other alumni with accounts. More than 1,400 alumni have sent us their E-mail addresses, and of those, 99 percent say they want to receive E-mail from other alumni.

If you have an E-mail address but haven't told the Records Office, contact them at **alumni@swarthmore.edu** and let them know that you want to be included in the E-mail forwarding system. They will then send you the particulars about how to contact your classmates and others on-line.

Good reading ... The *Swarthmore College Bulletin* was named one of the nation's top five college general interest magazines—taking a second-place silver medal—in the 1995 recognition awards sponsored by the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE).

One gold medal, two silver medals, and two bronze medals were awarded in the category from a field of 46 entries.

Urp! ... And you thought only armies marched on their stomachs. The Alumni Office reports spending $300.97 on pizza alone to feed the 96 student workers over Alumni Weekend. Students also went through 264 bottles of soda, iced tea, and fruit juice, gallons of milk and orange juice, and untold numbers of hamburgers and hot dogs.



Astronomer Peter van de Kamp, a leader in the research of low-mass stars, dies

Astronomer Peter van de Kamp (left), whose pioneering work in the search for planetary companions to nearby stars spanned more than 40 years, died in May at his home in the Netherlands. He was 93.

Van de Kamp joined the Swarthmore faculty in 1938. Considered one of the world's leading authorities on astrometry—the branch of astronomy that deals with measuring the masses and distances of stars—he initiated and led the Sproul Observatory's research that increased astronomers' knowledge of low-mass stars and stellar distances.

He was also a humanist and a Renaissance man, a talented musician and composer who appreciated the arts as much as science. From 1944 to 1954, he conducted the College's orchestra. At his 70th birthday dinner, he was presented with an original piano composition by Peter Schickele '57 titled "The Easy Goin' P.V.D.K. Ever Lovin' Rag."

Van de Kamp was the author of many articles and books, including *Principles of Astrometry, Basic Astronomy, Elements of Astromechanics*, and *Stellar Paths*. He retired from the College in 1972 as the Edward Hicks Magill Professor Emeritus of Astronomy and Director Emeritus of the Sproul Observatory.

Reach out to Hans ... *Hans Wallach, the Centennial Professor Emeritus of Psychology (with Kenneth Gergen, the Gil and Frank Mustin Professor of Psychology, at Wallach's 90th birthday party), has finally retired. Although his retirement was official 20 years ago, Wallach continued to conduct research until last fall, when his health began to fail. He still enjoys interacting with colleagues and former students. If you'd like to send him a note or a card, the address is: Harston Hall, 350 Haws Lane, Flourtown PA 19031.*

Champion talkers

Swarthmore's Peaslee Debate Society keeps racking up points. After becoming the only U.S. team ever to win the North American Debate Championship in February, seniors Jeremy Mallory and Neal Potischman talked their way to first place in the National Championship of American Parliamentary Debate held in April. And that made Swarthmore the only school to win consecutive national championships—and Potischman the only individual to do the same (he won last year with partner David Carney '94).

Facing top-ranked Columbia, Mallory and Potischman argued for displaying nude photographs of victims in Jerusalem's Holocaust Museum "for the greater good of maintaining society's collective memory" of the tragedy.

Placing in the top 20 teams were Sarah Cebik '95 and Tara Zahra '98.

Debaters Jeremy Mallory '95 (left) and Neal Potischman '95.

Women's tennis team captures its first Centennial Conference Championship

The 1995 spring sports season was highlighted by some spectacular individual performances. Four different athletes in individual sports were invited to their respective NCAA tournaments.

Foremost among the accomplishments of the spring teams were those of the **women's tennis** team, which captured Swarthmore's first Centennial Conference Championship in the two years since the conference originated. The women ended up with an overall record of 14-2 and a conference record of 10-0. Number one singles player Kim Crusey '95 was invited to the NCAA Division III tournament. Crusey finished the season with records of 14-1 overall and 10-0 in the conference and was also named as the Centennial Conference Player of the Year. Number two singles player Becca Kolasky '96 and number three singles player Ayanda Nteta '95 were also first-team Centennial Conference selections.

The **men's tennis** team also had an extremely successful season. Finishing with an overall record of 9-9, the team was ranked 13th in the nation. Although only 12 teams are invited to the NCAA tournament, the Garnet received a last-minute invitation when one of the 12 teams selected had to decline because of an NCAA violation. At the nationals Swarthmore lost two of the three matches to wind up 10th. Leading throughout the season were number one singles player Chris Pearson '95 and number two singles player Barry Mook '96.

The **women's track** team had a record of 5-1 this spring. The women were led throughout the season by Kate Dempsey '95, who qualified for nationals in the 800m. At the NCAA tournament, Dempsey ran a personal-best time of 2:14.93, finishing 10th. The 4x400m relay team of Dempsey, Jill Wildonger '97, Tori Washington '97, and Danielle Duffy '98 set a new school record of 4:08.88 and finished second at the Penn Relays. The 4x100m relay team of Duffy, Washington, Wildonger, and Catherine Laine '98 broke both a school record and a conference record and won the conference championship with a season-best time of 51.89.

The **women's lacrosse** team had another successful season with a record of 13-4. Thirteen wins is the most a Swarthmore women's lacrosse team has ever had in one season. Finishing her spectacular career was first-team All-American Julie Noyes '95, who ended her three-year career with a total of 278 goals, 38 assists, and 316 points. Senior Madeline Fraser also received national All-American honors and was a first-team All-Conference pick. Also receiving All-Conference honors were second-team selection Bess O'Neill '95 and honorable mention selections Lara Ewens '96, Heather Maloney '95, and Jill Maybee '96.

The **men's track** team had an overall record of 4-2. At the Centennial Conference Championships, Shan Sutherland '97 took first place in the pole vault. Junior captain and "utility man" Sam Paschel was named as the team's most valuable player; he was the highest scorer throughout all the meets, having scored points at various meets in the long jump, pole vault, triple jump, 200m, 400m, and both the 4x100m and 4x400m relays. The 4x400m relay team of Paschel, Mike Turner '96, Eric Pakurar '97, and Walid Gellad '97 took fourth place at the Penn Relays.

Ernie's last game ... *Students and members of the faculty and staff turned out to wish baseball coach Ernie Prudente many extra innings after a 26-year career at the College. Although he won't officially retire until the end of the year, his final game as coach was in April against Washington College. Among well-wishers were Tave Holland, the long-time equipment manager in the Physical Education Department, and his great-great-grandson, Ryan.*

The **baseball** team ended up with a record of 10-27. Jeremy Bonder '97 and Pat Straub '97 were both named as honorable mention All-Conference selections. Bonder had 84 consecutive errorless chances at second base, while outfielder Straub led Swarthmore with his batting average of .356 and in runs scored (17), hits (26), triples (1), and home runs (2). Craig Rodner '96 set a conference record with 17 stolen bases in conference games.

The **men's lacrosse** team ended the season with a record of 4-10. Goalkeeper Ben Henwood '97 was third in the Centennial Conference with a save percentage of 60.1 (256 saves, 171 goals against). Midfielder Ben Seigel '96 was named to the All-Conference second team, while defender Andy Petusky '95 was an honorable mention selection. Swarthmore was led in scoring by Brian Dougherty '95, who had 28 goals and 16 assists.

The **softball** team had a tough time this season, ending with a record of 1-27. However, the team remains young as only Kimberly O'Shea, Margy Pierce, and Janine Sperman graduate. The **golf** team also had a difficult season. Shawn Bundy '97 played at number one for the Garnet, while captain Matt Metcalf '95 played number two.

Swarthmore recaptured the **Hood Trophy** by a score of 9½–6½. Swarthmore won in women's lacrosse, women's tennis, and men's tennis. Haverford won in men's track, women's track, and men's lacrosse. Baseball was split.

The Conjurers

There's an element of magic in all good children's books.

By Rebecca Alm

In the great green room, there was a telephone...." How many times did I read those words, from *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown, to my infant daughter? You could hardly even say that the classic picture book has a story, yet something about it has power still. After many readings it begins to resemble an incantation, working its magic on both the reader and the small listener.

There's an element of magic in all good children's books, whether they be about dogs or devils, frogs or families, history or mystery. The power of such books comes from beyond print or pictures on a page—it comes from the mind and heart of the children's book author.

Quite a few Swarthmoreans write children's books, but I spoke with just five—four alumnae and one faculty member—whose books I enjoyed and admired. Between them these five authors have written more than 60 children's books of different types—fiction and nonfiction, novels and picture books. Each is inspired and does her work in a different way, but I found that all have made their way into the sometimes difficult business of publishing children's books without losing one important quality—they are still a part of the world of children. Whether conjuring wonder or despair, laughter or curiosity, none of these writers has quite left behind the child she once was.

Writing Picture Books

If you spend much time in the children's departments of bookstores or libraries, you've probably met Carl. Since the huge black rottweiler first appeared with his infant mistress in *Good Dog, Carl* in 1985, he's been the star of seven gorgeously illustrated picture books, with a new one due out in the fall. He's the best known creation of Sandra Woodward Darling '63, who writes under the pen name Alexandra Day.

Carl was born one Sunday when Sandra Darling and her book collector husband, Harold, stood outside a Zurich bookstore, looking in the window of the closed shop. A book happened to be open to a cartoon "of a little dog who was left with a baby in a cradle," explains Darling. "The baby falls out of the cradle, and the dog tries to get it back in, and he finally succeeds just as the parents walk in. And my husband said, 'You know, that's a great idea. We could make a great children's book out of that.'"

Darling had illustrated two children's books, and she decided to try writing one. "We had two dogs," she says, "and I wanted the baby to ride and the dog to be the leader, so I picked the big dog, which was a rottweiler." (Eventually the smaller dog, an Irish terrier, got his reward. He served as the model for the title character of *Paddy's Pay Day*, published in 1989.)

> *In order to make fantasy work, the artist must take it absolutely seriously.*
>
> —Sandra Darling '63

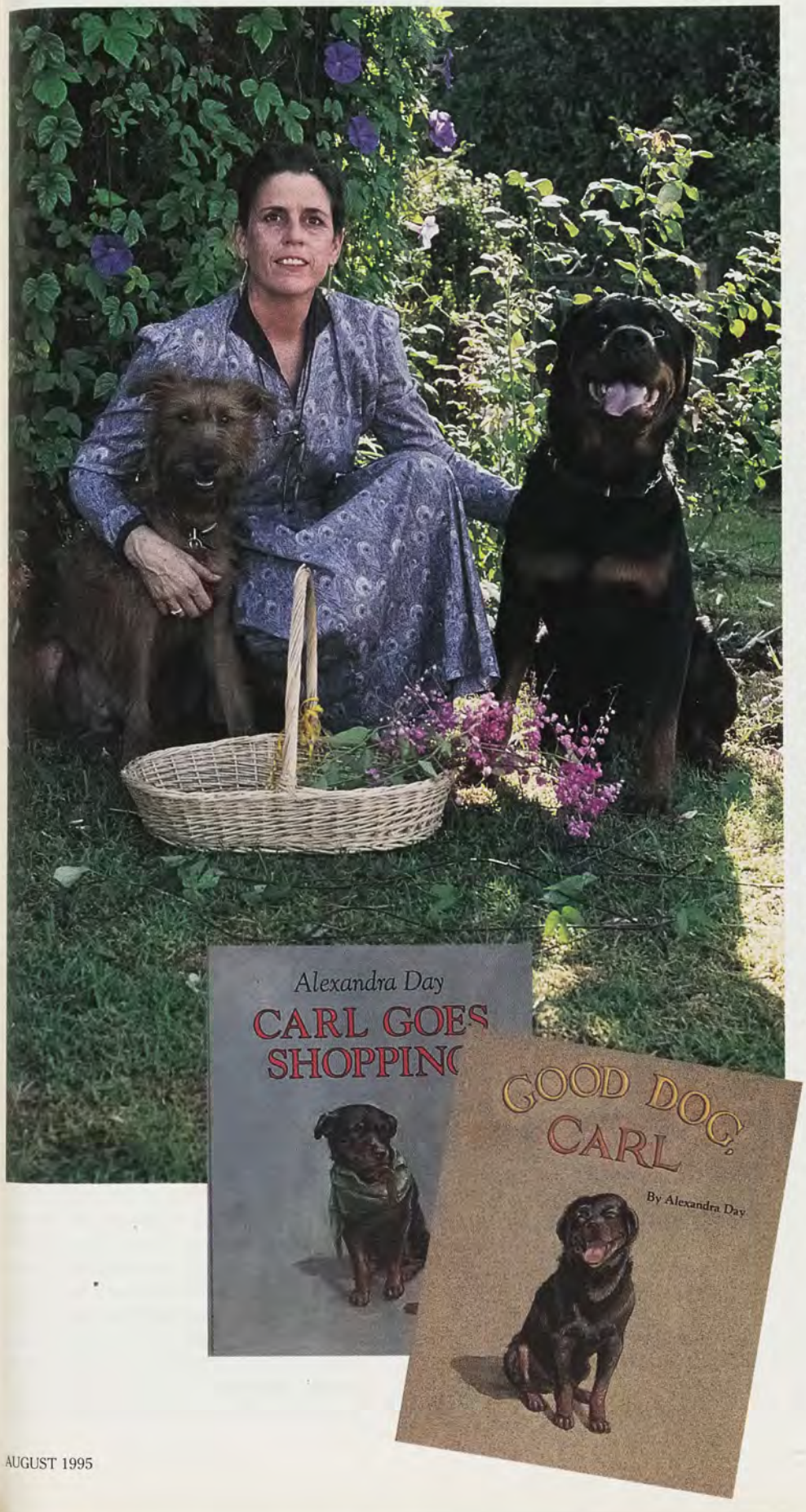
In his first book, Carl is left to babysit the baby. He helps her out of her crib and watches her carefully as she jumps on the bed, slides down the laundry chute, and gets a snack from the kitchen, among other things. After Carl gives the baby a bath, returns her to her crib, and cleans up the house, the mother returns. Pictures tell the story—there are only 12 words in the book, three of which are on the last page: "Good dog, Carl."

Sandra Darling's father was an artist, and as a child she lived in a house where "drawing and painting was going on all the time," she says. She is mostly self-taught, her only formal art training being a few courses at the Art Students League in New York City in the 1960s.

In 1972 she and her husband started Green Tiger Press, specializing in illustrated books, and in 1983 she illustrated her first book for the press, *The Teddy Bears' Picnic*. The press also published *Good Dog, Carl* before the Darlings sold the company in 1986 to a San Diego man, who later sold it to Simon & Schuster. Then the Darlings started their current business, Blue Lantern Studio, a design firm.

"I think the art of the picture book is different from the art of the illustrated book," Sandra Darling says. "The picture book has something in common with cinema, because it's a pictorial movement in time. Like a filmmaker I think about close-up and long shots, movement from left to right, color, focus on one part of the picture as opposed to another, and things like that. I have to think of the whole book as one work of art, like a film. But I also have to think as a painter—I'd prefer to have each picture be a successful painting in itself as well."

Her realistic style complements the fantasy elements of her books, Darling believes. "I think one reason the Carl books have been so popular is that they show a kind of 'what if' world,"



Sandra Woodward Darling '63

Pseudonym: Alexandra Day
Also: owner, with her husband, of Blue Lantern Studio (a design studio)
Formerly: owner, with her husband, of Green Tiger Press from 1972 to 1986
Children's books published: 18
First book: *The Teddy Bears' Picnic*, 1983: "Someone had been after Green Tiger Press to do a version of 'The Teddy Bears' Picnic'—you know the old song. I thought it would be fun to do it myself. It was a success, and naturally a success encourages you to go on."
"Carl" books: *Good Dog, Carl*, 1985; *Carl Goes Shopping*, 1989; *Carl's Christmas*, 1990; *Carl's Afternoon in the Park*, 1991; *Carl's Masquerade*, 1992; *Carl Goes to Daycare*, 1993; *Carl Makes a Scrapbook*, 1994; *Carl Pops Up*, 1994
Some other books: *Frank and Ernest*, 1988; *Paddy's Pay Day*, 1989; *River Parade*, 1990; *Frank and Ernest Play Ball*, 1990; *Frank and Ernest on the Road*, 1994; *My Puppy's Record Book*, 1994
Coming out: *Carl's Birthday*, fall 1995
Working on: *Sara's Imagination*, about imagination as "both a pleasure and a pain"
Also in the works: a Carl movie from Warner Bros., still in the very early stages of development
Family: Husband Harold, four children, three stepchildren, and one foster child (and one rottweiler and one Irish terrier)
Home: Seattle

Arielle North Olson '53
Formerly: children's book critic for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*
Children's books published: three
First book: *Hurry Home, Grandma!*, 1984: "It's about a grandmother on a birdwatching trip in Africa who's having wild adventures trying to get home in time for Christmas. I happened to be reading manuscripts for an agent who agreed to represent me and sold the book quite quickly."
Other books: *The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter*, 1987; *Noah's Cats and the Devil's Fire*, 1992
Working on: a story based on the collie she had as a teenager
Family: Husband Clarence (Ole), three grown children, and three grandchildren
Home: Webster Groves, Mo., and Oceanside, Ore.

she says. "What if you really could ride your dog? What if you could go down the laundry chute? I think that to encourage children to think playfully and creatively about the world is an excellent thing to do. But in order to make fantasy work, the artist must take it absolutely seriously."

For young children "the whole world is magic," she says. "Even though they haven't seen cats with wings, they're not sure that they don't exist—after all, they haven't seen most kinds of cats." And Darling is happy to join children in that magical world: "I am perfectly willing to believe that around the corner there is a winged cat. I think that children sense that and they feel our kinship."

Arielle North Olson '53, who has published three picture books, agrees that a writer for children can't lose touch with the world of children. "An author of picture books," she says, "must maintain that intellectual curiosity and enthusiasm of youth—that emotional edge."

Like Sandra Darling, Arielle Olson follows in a family tradition. Her father was Sterling North, author of *Rascal*, the 1964 Newbery Honor Book, as well as many other books. "He was a passionate writer," she remembers, "and I always wanted to be as much like him as possible." After Swarthmore she lived at home for a year working as a newspaper reporter, during which time her father gave her "a one-on-one course in creative writing unlike anything I've ever received in all of my schooling."

Her writing went "on the back burner" while she brought up three children, but in 1969 she began reviewing children's books for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* (she retired from that job last year). After writing about four of what she now calls "practice stories," Olson sold her first picture book, *Hurry Home, Grandma!* Her next book, *The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter*, was based on the true story of girl who tended a Maine lighthouse during a violent storm while her father was away. *Noah's Cats and the Devil's Fire*, her most recent book, was inspired by a Romanian folk tale about the devil coming aboard Noah's ark to try to sink it. The illustrations for her books, bright and colorful for *Hurry Home, Grandma!*, subdued and romantic for *The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter*, and dark and shadowy for *Noah's Cats*, were done by artists chosen by her publishers.

"Reviewing children's books was like taking a constant course in children's literature," she says. "Even reading bad books can help an aspiring author, highlighting awkwardness and verbosity and all the other mistakes you want to avoid. But good books offer more subtle lessons—if you can step aside to observe tech-

nique before the author sweeps you into his world."

"Emotional impact" is the most important element of a good children's book, Olson says. A book with a didactic message, barely fleshed out in a story, seldom works. "But if readers become emotionally involved with the character, they may gain insight into their own lives," she says.

And a children's book, particularly a picture book, has to be concise. "You have to make every word count," Olson says.

Writing Novels

If you are a writer, then you're infected. It's like a disease, and you can't help it—you have to do it," says Donna Jo Napoli, professor of linguistics at the College.

Napoli seems to have a serious case of writer's disease. She has published nine books in linguistics, plus numerous articles and reviews, and seven books for children, with one more coming out in the fall. She also writes fiction for adults—mysteries and fantasies and historical novels—and poetry.

Her novels for children range from fairy-tale fantasies to stories of contemporary family life. "One thing that I do is to take a well-known story and look at it seriously for the holes and try to fill them in," she says. In *The Prince of the Pond*, for instance, she tells the story of the Frog Prince from the point of view of a female frog who meets the prince just after he has been transformed. "If you think about what it would be like to turn into a frog," she says, "it's really an amazing thing. You probably wouldn't know the first thing about what to do." So the Prince in her story, known in the pond as "Pin," has to be taught how to jump and how to catch flies with his tongue.

The Prince of the Pond is aimed at third to fifth graders, and for that age group, Napoli says, she feels a responsibility to leave her readers "with a sense of hope." So although Pin is eventually kissed by the princess and turns back into a man, leaving his frog wife and children behind, the members of the frog family have learned how to take care of each other. (One of Pin's sons, in fact, becomes the protagonist of the book's sequel, *Jimmy, the Pickpocket of the Palace*.)

Others of Napoli's novels center, more or less realistically, on contemporary life. In those books especially, realistic dialogue is important, and that is where her scholarly work as a linguist connects to her fiction writing. "I'm very interested in how people talk to each other," she says. "In real conversation people don't generally talk in whole sentences—we interrupt each other and talk in fragments. But you can't do that in writing or you'll create chaos for your reader, so you have to give it a sense of being real without it being real at all. I study that,

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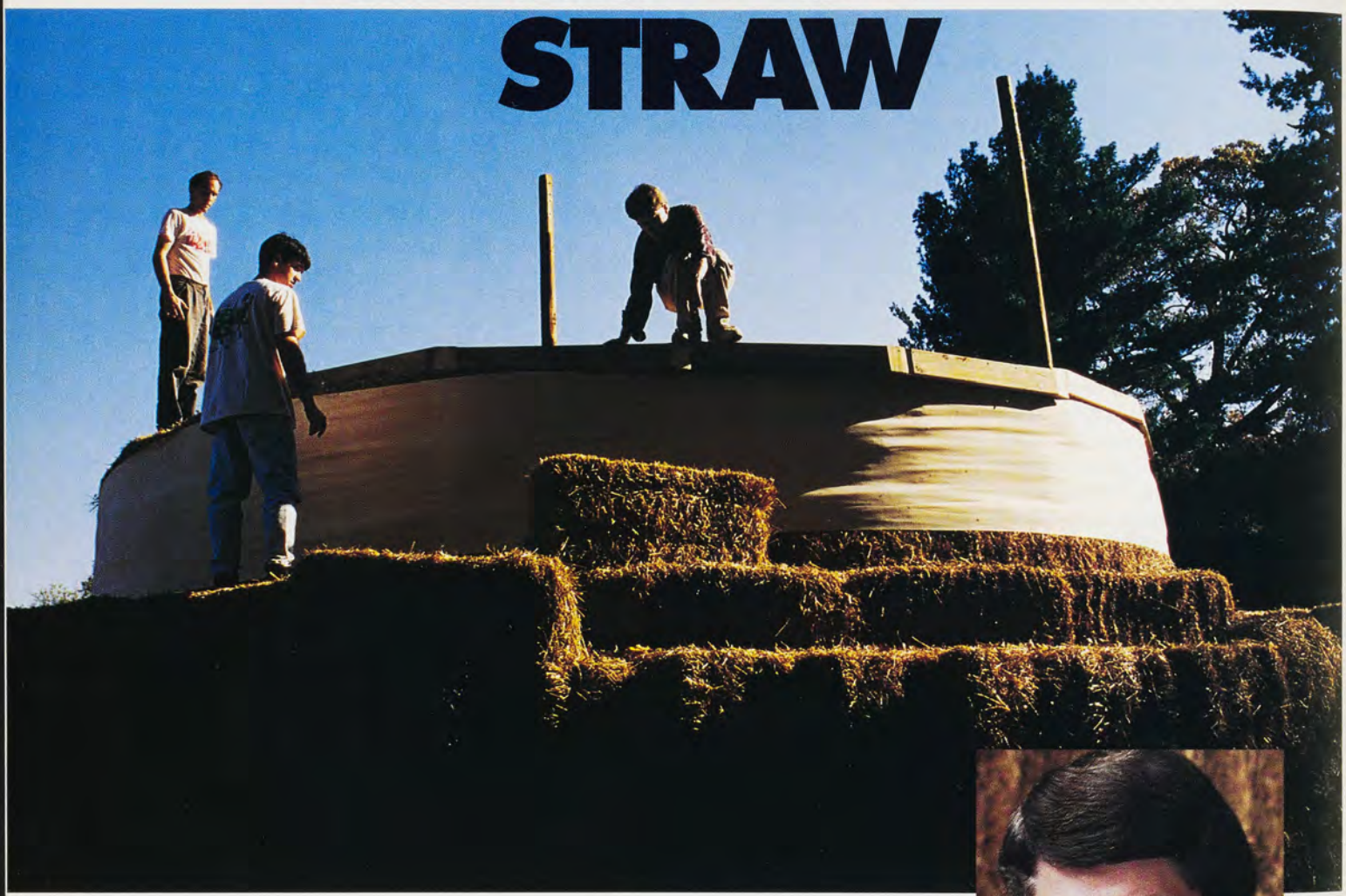
STEVEN GOLDBLATT '67

Donna Jo Napoli

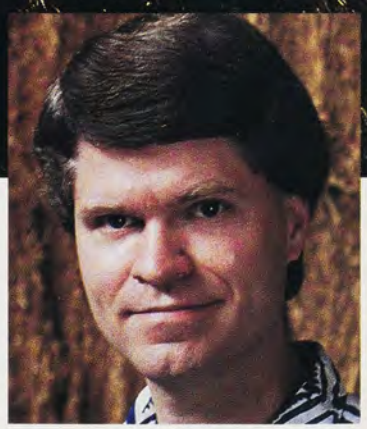
Also: Professor of linguistics at Swarthmore College (since 1987)
Children's books published: seven
First book published: *Hero of Barletta*, 1988 (a first reader): "It's a retelling of an Italian folk tale about a giant who is miserable about being a giant. It was published by Carolrhoda, and it was right up their alley because they publish fairy tales and stories about the handicapped, and this was both."
Other books: *Soccer Shock*, 1991; *The Prince of the Pond*, 1992; *The Magic Circle*, 1993; *When the Water Closes Over My Head*, 1994; *Shark Shock*, 1994; *Jimmy, the Pickpocket of the Palace*, 1995
Coming out: *The Bravest Thing*, fall 1995
Working on: *When the Sword Pierces My Heart* (sequel to *When the Water Closes Over My Head*) and *Zel* (a young adult gothic novel)
Family: Husband and five children

I'LL BUILD MY HOUSE OF STRAW

by Carol Brévart



It's no fairy tale as students build a new kind of house on campus.



Carr Everbach

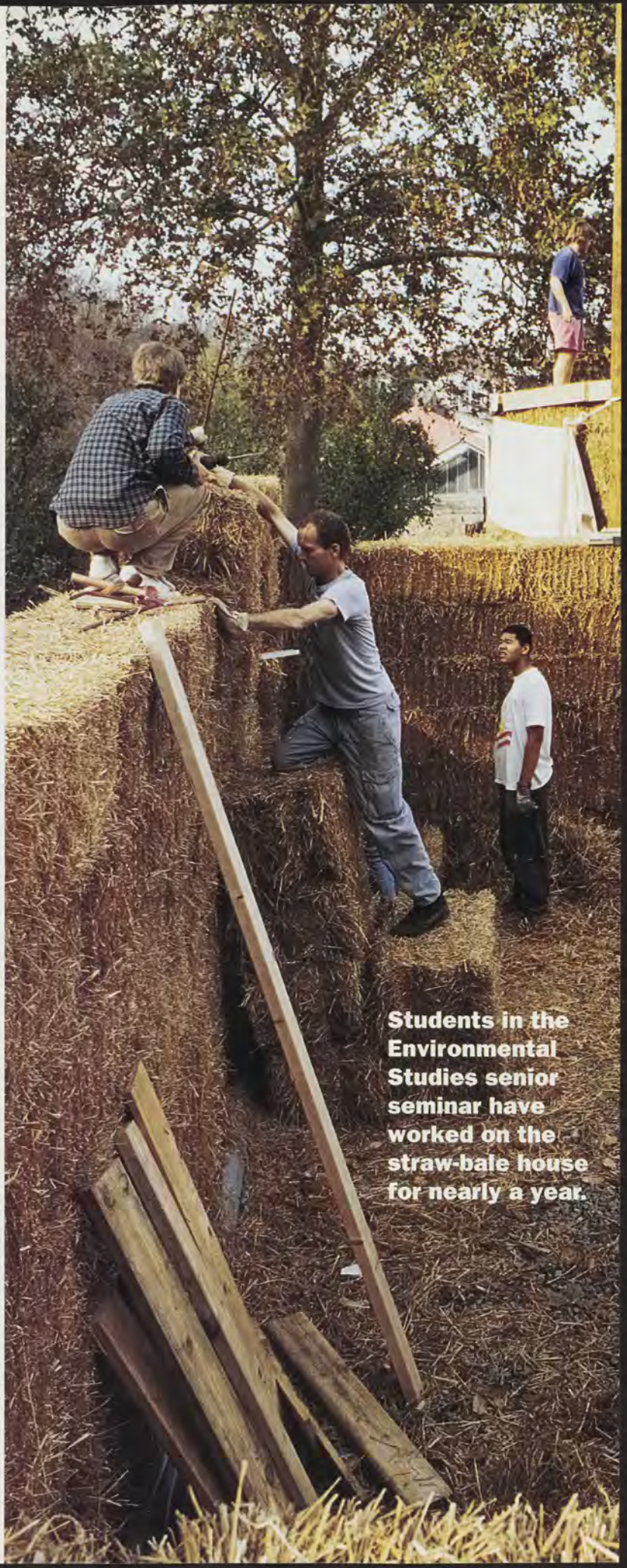
Once upon a time, there were two members of the Swarthmore College Department of Engineering—a young assistant professor and his student.

The eager student wished to go on a quest to Arizona and New Mexico—not to seek his own fortune, but rather to find energy-conserving technologies and environmentally friendly building practices that could improve the fortunes of his countrymen in Israel. Sadly, he did not win the fellowship in environmental studies for which he had applied. But just as the student was beginning to think that his dream would never come true, his professor uttered the magic words, "Listen, I have some money from another grant, with which I might be able to fund what you want to do." And so in 1993 the delighted and grateful student set off on his quest to the Southwest.

At the same time, the generous professor, who had been awarded a sabbatical year, also left Swarthmore, heading for South Dakota to teach math to Lakota-Sioux Indians. When the two adventurers returned to the College, they found that their quests were strangely intertwined.

The student told of weird and unusual things he had seen—of "earthship" houses built from old tires filled with compacted soil and of buildings made of straw. The professor for his part came home seeking an economical housing alternative to the Indians' run-down trailers, having observed that in South Dakota there were "tons of straw" available. So now the student was able to help the professor, because as the professor listened to the student's stories, an idea began to form in his mind. The tale ends with a sturdy house of straw that defies huffs, puffs, and much more—all for about $20,000, the price of an average trailer.

Photographs by Walter Holt



Students in the Environmental Studies senior seminar have worked on the straw-bale house for nearly a year.

But it's not a fairy tale after all—it's the story of Daniel Pedersen '94, Assistant Professor Carr Everbach, and a real straw-bale house that now stands next to Clothier Fields.

After hearing Pedersen give a talk extolling straw-bale technology, Everbach was inspired to propose building a straw-bale house to members of his senior Environmental Studies Seminar, scheduled for spring 1995. None of the participants, including Everbach, had ever built anything this ambitious before. As the undertaking would obviously extend beyond one semester, the group began to meet in March 1994 to exchange ideas.

The floorplan, drafted on a napkin in Sharples Dining Hall, showed a conventional rectangular space for bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen and, in acknowledgement of the Lakota-Sioux preference for circular architecture, a round living room—a total of almost 1,000 square feet. Although the idea for straw-bale buildings is not new, Everbach knows of none on this scale in the Northeast. His goal for the students, however, was "not just to


1


2


4


3

The project began with a simple goal—to build an experimental house that is both inexpensive and does minimal damage to the environment. None of the builders had ever done anything like this before.
1 The shallow foundation was insulated with polystyrene sheets.
2 Steel rods in the foundation await the first course of 20-inch-thick straw bales.
3 For the circular living room, bales were curved by placing them over a "little bump of rocks" and jumping on them.
4 Bamboo rods were driven into the walls to hold the upper courses in place.

build a straw-bale house but to learn how to live while doing minimal damage to the environment."

In August 1994 Everbach and a student assistant poured the house's foundation on a site adjacent to the Walter T. Skallerup Track. Using a Scandinavian technique, they dug a shallow trench along the house's perimeter, lined it with gravel, inserted a perforated drainpipe, and topped it with cement. Next they placed polystyrene sheets two feet into the ground around the foundation to trap heat inside the structure and to prevent the foundation from freezing. Everbach justified the use of a small amount of polystyrene by the fact that it permits a shallow foundation using very little concrete. As he explained: "Sometimes, in order to bring about some environmental good, you have to use a little environmental bad. Every single thing in this house is a trade-off, sort of two steps forward, one step back."

The walls were then built of 20-inch-thick, double-density straw bales, which have an insulation value, or R-value, of 45. (Conventional 3-to-6-inch fiberglass insulation material used in most homes has an R-value of 12 to 19. It is also bad for the environment, says Everbach, because of the large amount of energy needed to produce it.) Placed brick-like in staggered courses, the bales were held firm by vertical steel rods cemented into the foundation. Further rods of wood and bamboo (harvested from the Scott Arboretum) were driven through the upper layers.

For the living room, the bales were curved by placing them over "a little bump of rocks on the floor and jumping on them." The finished walls were then stabilized by a plywood "bond beam" fitted around the top perimeter.

"Everything in this house is a trade-off—sort of two steps forward, one step back."

At this stage a problem arose. The bales in the round room had not been placed directly on top of each other, so the walls flared at the top, making the upper diameter too wide for its bond beam to fit. The flaw was corrected by wrapping a strip of canvas around the upper walls and cinching it tight, "just like a girdle," until the bond beam could be positioned. (See photo, page 16.)

For the roof Everbach and his students would have preferred something natural like thatch, or even sod, tile, or slate, but, because of the prohibitive costs of these options, they ultimately settled on pressboard covered by conventional roofing. Light, strong, and inexpensive, pressboard is still relatively proenvironment in spite of small amounts of formaldehyde in the glue because it uses up waste wood scraps. The roof was insulated by blowing recycled newspaper cellulose into the 14-inch gap between the roof and ceiling.

A bond beam was placed around the top of the walls to hold them firm, and they were protected by a layer of stucco.

Please turn to page 68

OLD BUGS NEW TRICKS

The diseases that threaten us are changing with the times, says infectious disease specialist Bennett Lorber '64.

For Bennett Lorber '64, M.D., the most remarkable medical puzzles occur in real life.

For example: By the time a 32-year-old man was referred to Lorber for debilitating headaches, he had seen many specialists. At one point, misdiagnosed with Lyme disease, he had received intravenous antibiotics for six months. Lorber's question: What do you do for fun?

Two weeks before the headaches started, the patient replied, he had bought a pool table and was playing three to five hours a day. "I had him stand up, bend over as if he were leaning over a pool table, and extend his head back as if he were about to make a shot," Lorber says. "Then I asked him to hold that position." Sure enough, the headache got worse and the diagnosis was made.

Playing pool, Lorber surmised, was causing bony spurs on the man's spine to press against certain nerves. Eliminating the game eliminated the headaches, but after six weeks, the patient complained of missing his favorite sport. Lorber sent him to a physical therapist to create a neck brace that would support his neck when he bent over, allowing him to play pool again.

Such creative thinking is an essential medical tool. "Infectious disease doctors like to think of themselves as the Renaissance people of medicine," Lorber explains, people with wide-ranging interests and an ability to solve problems in unorthodox ways. That's the kind of thought process encouraged at Swarthmore, he notes.

Infectious disease specialists engage in "the purest detective work in all of medicine," says Lorber, who is both chief of infectious diseases and Thomas M. Durant Professor of Medicine at Temple University School of Medicine and Hospital. Cerebration, not procedure, is the technique of choice: "We gather the information, listen to the story, and examine the patient. We ask patients where they live, where they've been, what kind of pets they have, what they eat. Then we sit down and think."

One frequent dilemma is the cause of fever, usually presumed to be the result of an infection. Occasionally, however, it's something else, such as a connective tissue disease or an unrecognized early stage of leukemia or lymphoma. "We're the fever detectives," Lorber says.

Creative thinking is an essential medical tool. Cerebration, not procedure, is the technique of choice.

Physicians are attracted to working with infectious diseases, Lorber believes, partly because "it's not an organ-based specialty." Infections can strike any part of the body. In fact infectious disease is the only discipline that deals with the interaction of two biological systems—the human being that has the problem and the organism that's causing it.

Lorber's particular interests include infections of the central nervous system and those caused by anaerobic bacteria. He is an international authority on listeriosis, a brain disease that can be transmitted through food or from mother to newborn. When people call the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with questions about listeriosis, they're referred to Lorber.

Epidemiologists are asked to evaluate diseases and outbreaks that have stumped other experts. Occasionally a new disease emerges, arousing consternation until its cause and a cure are found. Few "emerging diseases," however, are actually new, Lorber

DENG-JENG LEE

DENG-JENG LEE

Diagnosing infectious diseases is "the purest detective work in all of medicine," says Bennett Lorber '64, M.D., teacher and clinician at the Temple University Medical School and Hospital.

says. Most are recognized entities that are either becoming more prevalent or are suddenly considered more important. A recent experience at Temple University Hospital, in which a medical student with undiagnosed tuberculosis exposed hundreds of patients and co-workers, is a reminder that TB is still very much with us. "Doctors have this idea that TB doesn't exist anymore," says Lorber.

One factor that permits the re-emergence of diseases is poverty. Among such diseases surfacing lately are tuberculosis, measles, whooping cough, and trench fever, last seen widely in World War II. An epidemic of syphilis in some cities has resulted from the common practice of crack cocaine users trading drugs for sex. The delivery of an infant infected with syphilis from its mother used to be so rare that medical students would be called in to look at the baby, which demonstrated certain unmistakable physical signs, Lorber says. Now the event is commonplace, a development that Lorber calls "disheartening and depressing."

Political agendas play their part in disease prevention and research. "If the outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in 1976 [in a Philadelphia hotel] had occurred in a women's inner-city church group or with any other non–politically identifiable block vote," Lorber says, "we still wouldn't know the cause. The Legionnaires demanded from their congressional representatives that a solution be found, and pressure was put on the CDC to figure it out." (It was former Swarthmore president Dr. David Fraser, then working at the CDC, who headed the investigative team that identified the bacterium in 1978.)

Some bacteria have evolved to withstand the antibiotics that killed them reliably for years. At Temple University Hospital and many other places, for example, bacteria called enterococci have started to shrug off vancomycin, the antibiotic that has traditionally overpowered them. More worrisome, Lorber says, is that the method used by the enterococci to resist antibiotics can potentially be transferred to more difficult microorganisms, such as *Staphylococcus aureus*, which can readily cause infections throughout the body.

Contributing to the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria is indiscriminate antibiotic use. Patients should stop insisting that their doctors prescribe an antibiotic for viral

By Marcia Ringel

infections and other nonbacterial illnesses, Lorber says. Otherwise the possible effects are sobering. In parts of Hungary and Spain, for example, the microorganism that causes most ear infections in children has become resistant to the antibiotics routinely used to treat them. Those infections now have to be treated with intravenous drugs.

Researchers are learning that infections bring about numerous conditions long thought to be caused by something else. Stomach and duodenal ulcers—and probably stomach cancers—are now known to be caused by *Helicobacter* bacteria. Hemolytic uremic syndrome, which can lead to kidney failure in children, starts with an intestinal infection by a certain type of *Escherichia coli*. Guillain-Barré syndrome, a paralytic disease, is commonly caused by a previous intestinal infection with the bacterium *Campylobacter*.

The increasing scarcity of research grants, Lorber says, may soon start to limit such discoveries. Some qualified investigators are leaving academic medicine, he warns, because they can no longer obtain funding for their work. Even money from an old standby, the pharmaceutical industry, is dwindling.

And, Lorber continues, the public and Congress tend to take an "atom bomb approach," identifying and concentrating on a sharply focused need, such as building the bomb or sending Americans to the moon. Yet historically, he points out, scientific discoveries that improve public health have come from unexpected places, not from applied technology. "If we really understood how scientific progress works," he says, "we would fund researchers in basic science to develop the next century's exciting breakthroughs. If we don't we're going to lose our position as the world's scientific leader."

More immediately, Lorber says, what the public needs most is to learn how to protect itself from infection. "If you want to improve public health, the single most useful thing you can do is to educate people," he believes. But public health education must be provided early enough to make a difference. A recent experience brought this home to Lorber.

Last summer he was asked to speak to a group of 14- and 15-year-olds about AIDS. "My mission was to get these kids to use condoms," he says. He planned to use street language in explaining how to use condoms and to approach the young teenagers on their own level. When he arrived he saw that two of the 22 participants were visibly pregnant and three were holding babies on their laps. The health hazards of sex, he asserts, should be taught starting in the first grade. "Education can have an incredible impact," he concludes, "but we do it wrong and we do it too late."

What would he do if he were in charge of the public health? "Put an incredible tax on cigarettes."

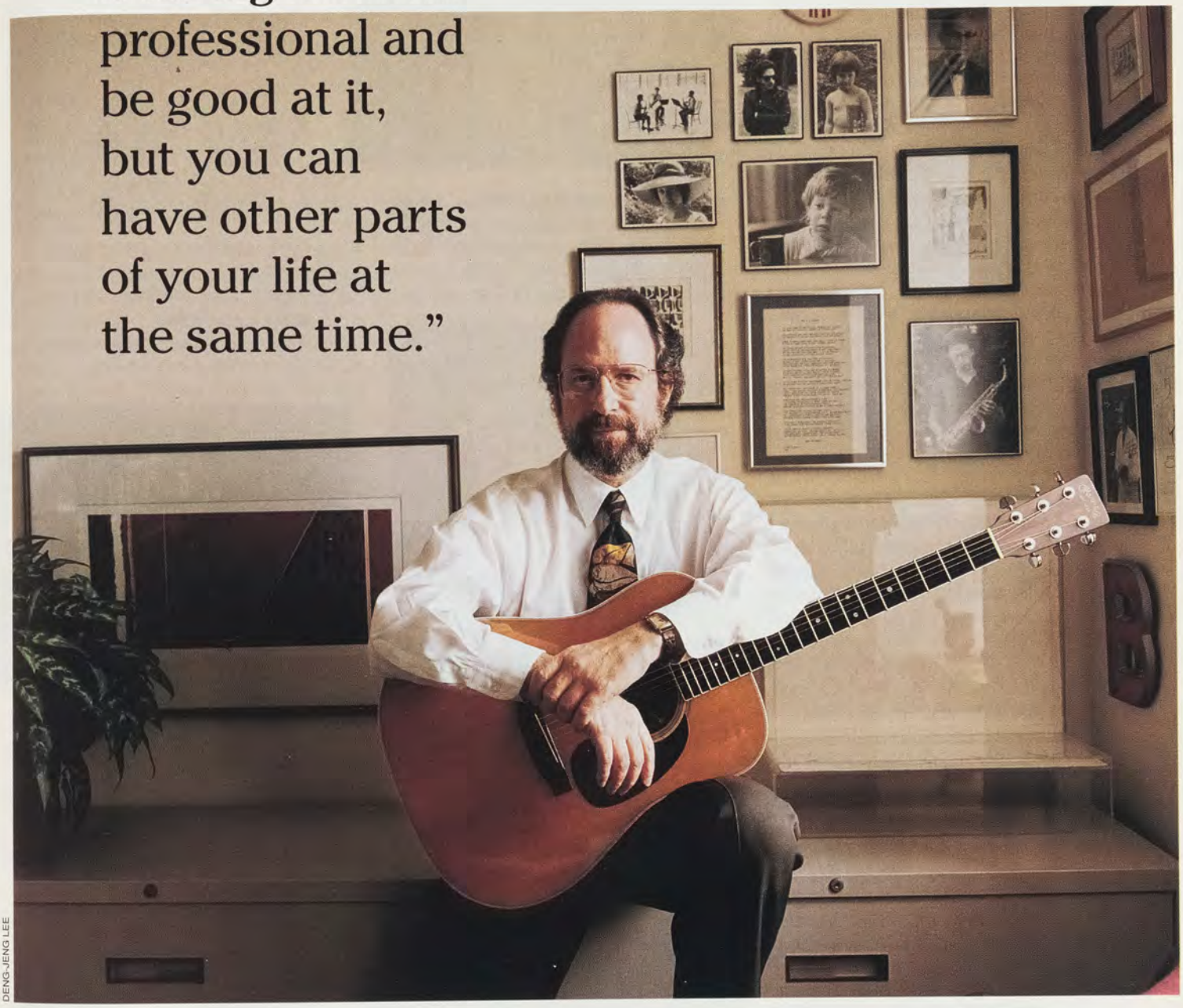
Prevention, especially with vaccines, is one of the greatest gifts of infectious disease medicine, Lorber says. Parents need no longer worry all summer that their children will contract polio while swimming. A vaccine for hepatitis A was released early this year and a chicken pox vaccine was unveiled on May 1. A vaccine now given routinely to babies has reduced *Hemophilus* infection, a major cause of meningitis in children, by over 90 percent in the last two years. Yet in Philadelphia, where Lorber works, 40 percent of children entering the first grade have received no immunizations. "We should be doing better by our children," Lorber says. "We have the knowledge and the tools, but we don't implement them. It's a disgrace."

Asked what he would do first if he were put in charge of the public health, Lorber quickly replies, "Put an incredible tax on cigarettes." It has been demonstrated, he says, that even a small increase in price decreases the use of tobacco by a substantial percentage. Smoking currently causes hundreds of thousands of deaths each year in the United States.

One particularly strong influence on public concern is health reporting in the media, which fluctuates capriciously. Herpes and Lyme disease, once magazine cover stories, remain prevalent in America but have faded into the media background from overexposure. In contrast, Lorber attributes to media hype the public hysteria over the recent outbreak of Ebola virus, "which is taking place on the other side of the world and is extremely unlikely ever to cause a problem in this country." People should be more concerned, he asserts, about hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, a serious disease carried by animals that has been recently appearing in humans in the United States but inexplicably has received scant public attention.

The infectious disease with an unyielding grip on public attention is AIDS. While recent advances in the prevention and treatment of common infections that complicate AIDS have resulted in longer, more productive lives for AIDS patients, the disease still presents a paradox for doctors. The difficulty of knowing that the patient will ultimately die, Lorber observes, is balanced by the privilege of being allowed to be "the kind of doctor that I thought I wanted to be when I went to medical school—somebody who takes care of people over an extended period of time, gets to know them extremely well, gets to hear the most intimate details of their lives, and becomes their confidant and friend. The best parts of human relationships are available to doctors who take care of patients with AIDS."

"You can be a caring medical professional and be good at it, but you can have other parts of your life at the same time."



DENG-JENG LEE

Lorber keeps a guitar in his office to plunk at the end of the day while talking things over with his medical students.

To relieve stress and for relaxation, Lorber has played the guitar for 30 years. "By sheer persistence I've achieved a certain minimal level of accomplishment," he says, calling himself a "hack folkie." Lorber keeps a guitar in his office to plunk at the end of the day while talking things over with students. The point, he says, is to demonstrate that "you can be a medical professional and care deeply about your work and be good at it, but you can have other parts of your life at the same time."

Music in the family has entered the professional realm through Lorber's older son, Sam '90. This spring he received a master's degree in classical saxophone performance from the New England Conservatory of Music. Lorber's younger son, Joshua, age 25, works with young children at a pediatric hospital in Philadelphia. "Kids gravitate to him," Lorber says. "He's quite exceptional." Sam and Joshua's mother is Carol Finneburgh Lorber '63, whose acquaintance Lorber calls "the best thing Swarthmore ever did for me."

As an undergraduate Bennett Lorber told his friends that his parents were trapeze artists. "Because I could

juggle and walk on my hands," he says, "people believed me." They shouldn't have; he made it up. His father was a wrought iron worker in Center City Philadelphia. When World War II absorbed most decorative metal, he bought a movie theater in Emmaus, Pa. "From age 3 to college, I saw two or three movies a week," Lorber recalls. His mother is a graduate of Temple. His parents, both 81 years old, still live in Emmaus.

Leaving public high school, Lorber wanted to be a doctor. At Swarthmore he majored in biology but says he took many classes in art history "because it was so wonderful." One of his mentors was Gilmore Stott, who first met Lorber during his admissions interview in 1960. Lorber hadn't been sold on the College, but when the interview was over, he told his mother that he would feel bad if he didn't go there because the interviewer had been so nice to him.

As an incoming freshman, Lorber found a note from Stott in his mailbox, inviting him to his house for a glass of cider after chemistry lab. Following a hand-drawn map, he stayed for dinner and enjoyed the first of many visits to Stott's family-away-from-family on campus. Lorber also took an ethics class with Stott. Later, during Lorber's first year of medical residency, Stott guided him through the labyrinth of obtaining an honorable discharge from the Army as a conscientious objector.

Lorber's interest in infectious diseases was first stirred by an invertebrate zoology course with Swarthmore Professor Norman Meinkoth, who taught at Swarthmore for more than 40 years. "He referred to those small living animals as 'creatures,'" Lorber says. "He never lost his sense of wonder at the variety of life forms, and he was able to communicate that beautifully."

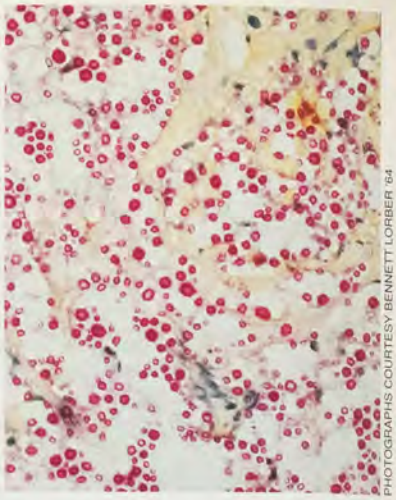
Once, a few hours after Lorber had given an oral report, Meinkoth spotted him on campus and said, "I know you want to go to medical school, but whatever you do with the rest of your life, I hope some part of it will be in teaching."

"He put his hand on my shoulder," recalls Lorber, "and said—I'll never forget this—'You have a real talent for teaching.'" Years later Lorber realized

Legionnaires' Disease struck at a Philadelphia hotel in 1976. This X-ray shows the fluid-filled lungs of an early victim who was treated by Dr. Lorber.

Chromobacterium violaceum is an unusual purple-pigmented bacterium that attacks persons with a rare disorder of the white blood cells. Lorber has treated several of these patients.

Opportunistic infections can attack people who have had life-saving surgeries. One patient had a device implanted in her head and later developed this brain fungus.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY BENNETT LORBER '64

A yeast infection (red dots) invades the skin of an AIDS patient. This infection is often seen in transplant patients whose immune systems are deliberately suppressed.

Kids' sneakers have recently been found to harbor the bacterium Pseudomonas, which can cause a bone infection in conjunction with puncture wounds.

The bacterium Listeria produces a "beautiful umbrella" when grown in a test tube. Lorber is an authority on listeriosis.

to his surprise that teaching was the work he loved best.

Shortly after joining the faculty at Temple, where he has remained since his internship in 1968, Lorber won the first of many teaching awards. "Out of the blue comes this postcard," he says. "It read: 'Dear Bennett: I remember telling you in invertebrates that you should be a teacher. Congratulations. Norm.' I still have the card. I can't tell you the impact it had. I found out later that he knew where every student he ever had was and what they were doing."

Meinkoth's methods exerted a powerful and lasting influence. "The level of his teaching was extraordinary," Lorber says. "He was probably the best-prepared teacher I've ever seen. When I have to give a lecture that I've given repeatedly and I'm tired, there's always the temptation to give the same talk as last year. Then I say to myself, 'Norman Meinkoth never did that once in his life.'"

Another lasting influence, Lorber says, was that "after taking invertebrate zoology, I never ate a clam or oyster." He won't eat sushi, either, although he refuses to tell other people what not to eat. (Lorber's tip for confirmed sushi enthusiasts: To avoid fish tapeworm, don't eat raw freshwater fish, such as salmon. Stick with tuna and other saltwater varieties.)

Lorber savors watching his graduate students "make the quantum leap from being smart young doctors to true experts, reaching the next level of creative thinking. It's magic—so exciting." The development of medical school undergraduates is another pleasure. "It's immensely satisfying," Lorber says, "to see them develop from raw talent into caring, competent professionals." At the recent Temple medical school graduation, he says, he watched his students collect their diplomas and "sat there feeling as if I would explode with joy."

The field of infectious diseases is expanding so greatly that "there has never been a more exciting time to specialize in it," says Lorber, whose senior elective in that subject is packed every year. Whether or not his students decide to specialize in epidemiology, he says, the discipline is "an extremely important part of turning people into doctors. It helps them use the skills that have become hidden by the immense clutter poured into their heads in medical school."

Lorber takes great care in deciding what he'll add to the clutter. With teaching that highlights a balanced life and exhibits a powerful concern for the health of children and the poor, those generations of doctors and their patients are being well served. ■

Marcia Ringel is a freelance writer who refuses to eat sushi but would consider an invitation to a clean hot tub.

This disease brought to you by modern civilization

Societal changes—the way we live our lives—can have a tremendous impact on patterns of disease," notes infectious disease specialist Bennett Lorber. Developments range from an increase in parasitic infections accompanying the proliferation of sushi bars in the United States to exotic infections transmitted by stowaway pathogens during national and international travel.

One disease that has been identified in humans only since 1976 is cryptosporidiosis, which causes severe intestinal pain and diarrhea and can be lethal to people whose immune systems are weakened by HIV or other infections. In 1993 some 400,000 people in the Milwaukee area developed cryptosporidiosis, caused by a protozoan, after swimming in public pools whose water had been contaminated by runoffs from nearby fields. More than 100 died. If the outbreak had occurred in 1975, Lorber says, epidemiologists would have been baffled.

Tight quarters harbor the spread of new and old diseases. Influenza, shingles, and tuberculosis are making a comeback in nursing homes. Giardiasis, a parasitic infection that causes nausea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and diarrhea, is spreading in day care centers. TB is particularly fierce among the homeless, a large percentage of whom, Lorber says, are Vietnam veterans who have never been able to reconnect to society. Trench fever, a disease carried by lice, was last seen in the filthy, overpopulated trenches of the two World Wars. Now it's striking the homeless, Lorber says, "living in the trenches of our cities."

On the other end of the lifestyle scale, poorly cleaned hot tubs incubate microorganisms such as amoebas that infect the eye. *Pseudomonas* folliculitis, a nasty rash around the hair follicles, is so often the result of soaking in sizzling hot tubs that it's commonly called hot tub folliculitis. The same bacterium lingers in the lining of steamed sneakers at spas, attacking the bones of the feet. Prevention: Air out your sneakers and wear clean, dry socks.

Lorber has listed 16 emerging diseases for *Bulletin* readers. The tally, he says, is growing all the time.

New diseases
AIDS
Cryptosporidiosis
Ehrlichiosis (similar to Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever)
Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome

New geographic range for old diseases
Chagas' disease in Central American immigrants
Malaria in American travelers

New populations at risk
Giardiasis in day care centers
Trench fever in the homeless
Tuberculosis in nursing homes

New tricks for old bugs
Pseudomonas folliculitis
Streptococcal toxic shock syndrome

New faces for old diseases
Atypical measles syndrome (can include pneumonia)
Bacillary angiomatosis
Infant botulism

New ecological niches for old bugs
Hot tub-associated amoebic infections of the eye
Sneaker-associated *Pseudomonas* osteomyelitis

—*M.R.*

SWARTHMORE HAPPENINGS

North Carolina: Alumni, parents, and friends gathered for a guided tour of the Duke Primate Center on June 4. Priscilla Coit Murphy '67 and George Telford '84 organized the event.

Philadelphia: On June 10 the Philadelphia Connection enjoyed a walking tour of Chestnut Hill led by Dr. David Contosta, History Department chair at Chestnut Hill College and author of *Suburb in the City*, a book about Chestnut Hill. The tour was arranged by Mary Woolson Cronin '83.

San Francisco: Alumni from classes of '90 through '95 spent a fun-filled afternoon in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park on June 25. The outing was coordinated by Dave Hochschild '93 and Leslie Bell '92.

Washington, D.C.: The Swarthmore Washington, D.C., Connection joined area Haverford alumni for the musical *Bessie's Blues* at the Studio Theatre. Serge Seiden '85, production stage manager and literary manager, was on hand for a post-performance discussion.

DENG-JENG LEE

Award Winners ... *Debby Van Lenten '90, secretary of the Alumni Association, presents the Joseph B. Shane Award to Linda Rothwell Lee and Bill Lee, both '60, at Collection during Alumni Weekend. Named for Joe Shane, vice president for alumni and public relations from 1951 to 1972, the award was established in 1985 to honor alumni who have given outstanding service to the College.*

Alumni Association Officers and Alumni Council for 1995–96

For the address or telephone number of any member of Alumni Council, call the Alumni Office (610) 328-8402, or E-mail alumni@swarthmore.edu.

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President Designate
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Anne Matthews Rawson '50
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**Elected to Council in 1995*

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Scarsdale, N.Y.

Elizabeth Dun Colten '54
Upper Saddle River, N.J.

Alice Higley Gilbert '48
Garden City, N.Y.

Mark Guenther '94
New Paltz, N.Y.

James A. Perkins '34*
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Lawrence J. Richardson '78
Parsippany, N.J.

Elizabeth H. Scheuer '75
Bronx, N.Y.

Harlan Stabler Sexton '79*
Bronx, N.Y.

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C. Russell de Burlo Jr. '47
Belmont, Mass.

Dean W. Freed '43*
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Sherryl Browne Graves '69
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Marilyn Modarelli Lee '56
Greenfield, Mass.

Lisa A. Steiner '56
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Rebecca Voorheis '93
Arlington, Va.

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Arlington, Va.

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Washington, D.C.

Colleen A. Kennedy '72
Arlington, Va.

Betty Jo Matzinger Lash '87
Alexandria, Va.

Andrew D. Pike '72*
McLean, Va.

Zone E
Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, West Virginia, Wisconsin

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Morgantown, W.Va.

Charles L. Bennett '77
Chicago, Ill.

Jean L. Kristeller '74
Terre Haute, Ind.

Melissa Dietz Lojek '72*
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Lou Ann Matossian '77
Minneapolis, Minn.

Dorothy Watt Williams '50
Lakewood, Ohio

Zone F
Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, territories, dependencies, and foreign countries

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Atlanta, Ga.

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New Orleans, La.

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Zone G
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Portland, Ore.

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Erik A. Cheever '82
Media, Pa.

Glenn E. Porter '73
Millburn, N.J.

Redefining the role of Alumni Council

By Alan Symonette '76
President, Alumni Association

In recent years the Alumni Council has been struggling to define its role at the College. At our spring meeting we invited senior College administrators, members of the Board of Managers, and former Alumni Council presidents to discuss this issue. I came away from that meeting with two basic conclusions: First, that this self-analysis is not new but has occurred regularly throughout the history of Council. And second, that most alumni see a need for organized communication between the College and alumni. Indeed, in researching the history of the Council, I came across a memorandum from former President John Nason to the president of the Alumni Association on the subject of college–alumni relations. In that memo, Nason stated that the Alumni Association existed to serve two purposes:

"The first is to promote and facilitate those gatherings of alumni which bring together old friends, renew old acquaintances, and revive the sentiments of loyalty and affection which all graduates and former students of the College share in common." The second purpose is to "serve the College in whatever ways are possible."

This description accurately describes the purpose of the Association now, as it did in May 1948. Our challenge is to find creative ways to serve the current needs of the College and to address the changing relationships and expectations of its alumni.

Many of you recall the theme of President Alfred H. Bloom's 1992 inauguration speech, "Educating for Civic Responsibility in a Multicultural World." Since then the Swarthmore community has been engaged in a continuing discourse about how to achieve this mission. I believe that alumni can play a critical role in this discussion. Our educated perspective as dwellers in "the real world" and the economic, social, and spiritual experiences of our lives in this regard can not only be beneficial to the College but also to students who will face the challenges of that world.

DENG-JENG LEE

New Alumni Association president Alan Symonette visits during Alumni Weekend with Kathryn Morgan, who retired this year as Sara Lawrence Lightfoot Professor of History.

As the Alumni Association has increased in size, it has also become more diverse. Our connection with the College goes beyond the mere fact that we attended classes and/or graduated from Swarthmore. We connect with each other and the College through unique experiences as students and through our current interests. These connections are often based upon shared experiences or interests such as vocation, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. The Alumni Office currently recognizes and supports many groups organized around such interests. While such specialized interests may not be shared throughout the Association, they provide the basis and support for continued connection with and loyalty to the College. It is understood that the Association will continue to be inclusive of all of its members. Nevertheless Council must consider whether it should provide official recognition to or make any structural modifications to officially include those groups that choose to formally organize. A committee will discuss this subject throughout this year, and your input is encouraged.

Council Nominations Sought
You are invited to nominate candidates for Alumni Council. Please send your nomination to the Alumni Office by September 29, or E-mail to alumni@swarthmore.edu.

If you found two Swarthmore alumni on a desert island, you may not have much, but you would certainly have a conversation. Regardless of our individual interests or the nature of our relationship to the College, I have found that on the whole, we like to communicate with each other. I encourage all Council representatives to communicate with their "constituency" to discuss current issues on campus and to identify activities that encourage alumni participation.

On the page opposite are the names of your representatives. Please contact them with your suggestions, questions, and ideas. ■

Alumni Weekend '95: A Sam

More than 1,500 alumni, family, and friends came to campus June 2–4 to catch up on news of the College and each other. Among those caught by photographers Steven Goldblatt '67 and Deng-Jeng Lee are (clockwise, starting at bottom left): Douglas Spencer '53; former Swarthmore President John Nason with Anne Bonner, associate director of planned giving; Verdi Hoag Johnson '45; Barbara Taylor Crawford '45; Elizabeth Hirshfield '96 with mom Anne Newman

mpler of Faces and Fun

Hirshfield '70; Collection speaker Michael Dukakis '55; Susan Willis Ruff '60 with President Alfred H. Bloom and Charles Ruff '60; Onuoha O. Odim '85 with daughter Chinyére Anna Wren Odim; Class of 1990 standard-bearers Jennifer Austrian Post, Lisa Batt, Lane Wilder, and Jessica Hines Turner; Clifford Woodbury Jr., husband of Ethel Coppock Woodbury '35. Above, outgoing Alumni Council President Gretchen Mann Handwerger '56 addresses the gathering at Collection.

A Light that Shines Most Brightly

Mary B. Temple Newman '30 applies Quaker principles to life and politics.

On a January day in 1953 in the Massachsuetts State House, the swearing-in ceremony of newly elected senators and representatives was in progress. The chairman asked members to rise and raise their right hands, but one woman remained seated. Then the chairman announced, "Among the newly elected members there is a Quaker—Mrs. Mary Newman of Cambridge. Will Mrs. Newman please rise?" All through the House, there were whispers of "What's she doing?" Why's she doing that?" "Is she a communist?" What the members were witnessing was the affirmation of a Quaker member of the legislature—an event that had occurred only once in Massachusetts, 118 years earlier, when John Greenleaf Whittier, the Quaker poet and abolitionist, became a state representative in 1835.

When Mary B. Temple Newman '30 graduated from Swarthmore, she had no thought of entering politics. While working as administrative assistant to the comptroller at Swarthmore, she met Edwin Newman, a Quaker and faculty member of the newly formed Psychology Dept. They married in 1938.

During World War II, the Newmans spent a year in California running one of the civilian public service camps set up for conscientious objectors by the Friends and other religious groups. Back in Philadelphia in 1942, Mary became a volunteer in the Philadelphia office of the American Friends Service Committee. Ed, still teaching at Swarthmore, was also doing research at Harvard. They moved to Cambridge in 1946.

To someone raised in the Quaker tradition of sex equality, Massachusetts was a real surprise. Women could not serve on juries. Women teachers, if they married, lost their tenure. Nurses alone, among more than 20 professions and trades, had to have other medical professionals on their boards of certification. Seeking to influence these matters, Mary Newman joined the League of Women Voters. She became state legislative chairman and spent hours in the legislative galleries. It was the McCarthy era, and there were many bills regarding oaths, investigations, and the like, which she had opposed before legislative committees on behalf of the League. To her surprise when bills like these came to a floor vote, she found herself mentally voting with the Republicans.

No opponent-bashing here. Massachusetts Representatives John Moakley and the late Tip O'Neill helped honor Mary Temple Newman's distinguished career of public service.

First elected to the 240-member House of Representatives in 1952, Newman was one of four women—all Republicans. It was a challenging experience. While most legislation was considered on its merits, there were certain measures, some trivial and some, like much legislation affecting industry and organized labor, of real importance, where the voting pattern was almost entirely on party lines. After one such vote, she was motivated to try out in the Legislature a practice used in the Friends business meeting—no votes are taken, but instead a proposal is discussed until all objections are eliminated and a solution satisfactory to both sides is found. She tried it in a petty but long-battled matter: the placing of lights on the roofs of call-firemen's cars. The police had objected for some years. She reasoned with the firemen's lobbyist and then with the police lobbyist, offering minor amendments to the legislation. It worked—the amendment bill passed, and all were satisfied.

This became her trademark as a legislator. Finally appointed to the Committee on Commerce and Labor, she won the trust and respect of lobbyists both for the AFL-CIO and the Associated Industries. In fact, in the 1960s she was endorsed by the AFL-CIO, which led one of her colleagues, a longtime Democrat, to congratulate her, adding, "I hope this isn't going to hurt you in your district!" In the case of important issues where party division seemed imminent, she would sit down with the Democratic Speaker and discuss amendments to delete objectionable sections. And she found that it worked. In today's politics she deplores the "opponent-bashing" that often replaces problem solving.

In 1971 Governor Sargent appointed Newman to his new cabinet as secretary of manpower affairs. Replaced in 1975 after the election of Michael Dukakis '55, she was asked by the then House Speaker (also a Democrat) to act as a consultant to her former committee. In 1976 she became regional director for health, education, and welfare under President Gerald Ford. Since 1977 she has been a visiting professor in the College of Management at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. At age 86 she is still active there.

In November 1994 Mary Newman received the John Joseph Moakley Award for Distinguished Public Service, established in 1993 by the McCormack Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. In a profile announcing the award, Ian Menzies, a senior fellow of the Institute, spoke of "the principles of her strong Quaker faith." In her acceptance speech, Newman attempted to describe these principles. She spoke of Swarthmore, a Quaker college where the equality of men and women as to responsibility, opportunity, and achievement are a matter of course. Recalling her affirmation at her inauguration, she explained that to affirm means not maintaining a double standard of truth. "I felt it was making a commitment to my colleagues and I had better stick to it," she said. And she spoke of the consensus method, pointing out that this rests on an assumption of good will—a belief in "that of God in every man."

To Mary Newman the Moakley Award was one of the proudest events of her public life—but it was more than that. It was a tribute to the spirit of concern and caring that she encountered in political life transcending partisan, religious, and economic barriers. Maybe an excerpt from the award citation sums it up best: "Throughout your life you have identified the best in both friend and adversary and showed, in quiet but effective ways, the importance of leading by example.

"All in all, yours has been, and remains, a rich and productive life blessed with friends and admirers who stand in awe before your energetic and ceaseless activity. Yours has been, and still is, a light that shines most brightly before us."

Dying for a little chemistry

For Ruth Rand '56 teaching is not only about chemicals and color but commitment.

As Ruth Rand '56 passes along knowledge of traditional dying techniques to her high school science students, she hopes to create enthusiasm for the field of chemistry as well.

With the help of a $3,500 grant from the Council for Basic Education in 1993, Rand, who teaches at Albuquerque Academy in Albuquerque, N.M., studied how early cultures in the American Southwest and Mexico created color for textiles using organic materials. "They had to figure out what matter would stick to what fabric, what natural solutions to use to get the hue they desired, in what kind of container to prepare the dye, and how long to heat it," says Rand, who looked at the antique textiles themselves and at the limited research already done on them.

While modern chemists use synthetic compounds to create a rainbow of chemical dyes, ancient peoples crushed rocks and heated them to varying temperatures to alter the color of a mixture. They added iron to these mixtures, causing electrons to make "quantum jumps" thus changing the shade of a color. Rand says this knowledge helps people today connect to the art and thought processes of cultures that came before. She believes it is a major omission in scientific literature not to have included this type of information, and part of her mission is to record more in-depth data on the techniques.

Through her grant studies, Rand was able to learn more about the origins of the color cochineal, an intense red, which Rand says revitalized the European textile market in the 18th century. Many people believe the color is indigenous to Afghanistan, but in fact, its true roots are in the Spanish frontier, central Mexico, and northern New Mexico. People are also unaware, she says, of the biological procedures and labor required to harvest the female beetles that produce the color.

Ruth Rand '56 (pictured with her granddaughter Lyla) studies traditional textile dying techniques and works to instill an appreciation of chemistry in young people.

From a chemist's perspective, learning how ancient cultures created dyes was a scientific experience, but understanding *why* they chose to use certain colors has been a more spiritual one.

"In Native American culture, everything is connected and spiritual," Rand says. "As I've learned about the development of traditional dying techniques, I've heard more about spirituality, the wholeness of the earth, and respect for the environment." She says they chose colors that reflected those beliefs—today's colorists might call them earth tones.

Rand, who has lived in New Mexico for just four years, says her idea of studying natural dying techniques as a way to learn chemistry is slowly becoming accepted by other educators. In late May, however, Rand received the Outstanding Chemistry Teacher award from the New Mexico chapter of the American Chemical Society for her outreach work in the field.

Rand takes her love of chemistry directly to children in the city of Albuquerque and nearby rural areas who might not otherwise have an experience with this discipline. She helps them explore the wonders of chemistry through color by doing simple experiments or tie-dye projects. She often takes along her Albuquerque Academy students to help instruct.

"I think this might be an effective way to introduce chemistry to less privileged groups of students at an early age. Many schools don't start teaching experiential science until the high school level. And even if they have a lab, it's often not a very good one," she says.

Rand believes students are interested in learning chemistry through colors because "there's beauty in chemistry, and a lot of it comes from the colors that are created while investigating phenomena and basic matter."

In addition to working with her own students, Rand wants to encourage other Swarthmore alumni to get involved with young people and volunteer their time to teach basic chemistry to elementary-age students. "Anyone can do it, and I'd be happy to send them the material," says Rand. "You just have to know how to read and be willing to work with your hands."

—Audree Penner

Alive: Narratives of Animation, Metamorphosis and Development was published last year. **Lois** has been working actively in drama and civic theater. **Marian Westover Gade** reports a wonderful trip last year to northern England and Scotland, including the Isle of Skye. **Dave Holland** ran in his 17th straight alumni/varsity cross-country race last fall. He continues to help people with retraining and placement in his role as a job service representative for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Charles Cogswell is retired and still living in Hesperia, Calif., although he plans to move to the Monterey area eventually. When last heard from, he expected to do some part-time teaching at an aeronautical college. **Kathy Hayes Head** works full time in the Education Dept. at the Winterthur Museum, guiding and planning special programs for adults. **Jim** '54 is still practicing law. The **Heads** now have three grandchildren. **Jane Piper Worley** has retired to spend more time with family, to do a little teaching and volunteer work, and, she hopes, "to visit some of you." Rev. **Barbara Troxell** continues teaching field education and spiritual formation at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary. She has co-authored a book on ministerial reflection titled *Shared Wisdom*.

Woody Christian Tedeschi is "well into the grandparent business" with three little grandsons and two more newborns expected. **Try Wieland** is still working as a physician at the VA Outpatient Clinic in Anchorage, Alaska. He recently coordinated medical coverage for the Tour of Anchorage 50K. **Carolyn Cotton Cunningham** has joined that "happy group of 'grandparents'" with one granddaughter and a second grandchild expected. She has been working as a consul-

A Dancer's Dream

I gave up ballet at age 14 but made a comeback in my 40s.

By Linda Valleroy '72

During 1994 my wildest dreams came true. Not once, but three times. This Tina the Ballerina-Cinderella-Walter Mitty-Zelig story actually began during World War II, when my mother was accepted into the Royal Ballet School in London. But because my grandmother feared both the blitz and show business, she did not let her go. My mother eventually chose a more exotic place to live when she married my father and settled in St. Louis, Mo.

I was an 8-year-old ballet student when the Royal Ballet toured the states, and my mother and I went to see Margot Fonteyn dance in *The Sleeping Beauty* at the St. Louis opera house. After the final curtain call, I was enraptured and, turning to my mother, I pledged, "Mommy, some day I am going to dance in that ballet." She patted my little head and said, "Of course you will, dear." It took 36 years to keep that pledge.

So I went to ballet class and applied myself. But when I was 14, I gave up ballet and replaced it with cheerleading and modern dance and archery. And studying. By my late 20s, all the years of studying had resulted in higher degrees—and also in upper back pains. A girlfriend urged me to sign up for adult ballet classes: "You need to stretch—you need a break." I found that the ballet flame had been burning all along—like the stars when the sun shines during the day. Ballet became a refuge, saving me from the terminal sobriety of overwork. Once again, I applied myself.

The last year I lived in Washington, D.C., I learned that large ballet companies sometimes use dance-trained, musical supernumeraries to fill small roles in the story ballets. So I began to audition. I was rejected at first. Then, in April 1991, the Royal Ballet came—yes, the same Royal Ballet of my mother's and my childhood dreams—and I was selected as "The Queen's Head Lady-in-Waiting" in *Swan Lake* and as the understudy for court ladies in *The Prince of the Pagodas*. Those two weeks were more like *Fantasy Island* than *Swan Lake*. The first night I walked out to perform, I fell into an ecstasy, thereby forgetting my most crucial bits of mime.

In July 1991 I moved to Atlanta for a new job. Good career move. Bad ballet supernumerary move. I had only just unearthed the ballet otherworld and now I was moving away from it. But in January 1994 I learned that the Royal Ballet would be returning to the Kennedy Center in April. I began to plot. I flew up for the casting call, knowing that I would be auditioning for *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Mayerling*. What I did not know was that the Washington dates would be the world premiere of the Royal Ballet's new production of *Sleeping Beauty*, and that President Clinton, his family, and Princess Margaret would attend in the Presidential box on opening night. The casting call was a dream. I was exactly the right size and type to be one of the six Maids of Honor in *Sleeping Beauty*, and the ballet staff remembered me from 1991. I was also selected as the understudy for the female character parts in *Mayerling*.

"I was so much older then—I'm younger than that now." Linda Valleroy's childhood pledge was fulfilled when she was invited to dance with the Royal Ballet.

Those two weeks of rehearsals and performances were glorious. Because of the world premiere, the air was even more electric than usual. To be rehearsed by Anthony Dowell, the famed 20th-century dancer and artistic director of the Royal Ballet, and to work among some the world's top ballet artists, was grand. I loved being part of and observing how a ballet company of such stature produces and creates a work of art. The ways in which the artists, management, and technicians work together is intensely fascinating.

When I flew back to Atlanta after two weeks of grace and glamour and true grit, I felt like I was returning from Oz. But I also began dreaming about the Royal Ballet's return to the U.S., at the Metropolitan in New York City in July. As it happened, my work schedule obliged, and I was able to clear the time to go to the casting call for *The Sleeping Beauty*. And once again my dream came true. As I stood in the audition line, Anthony Dowell spied me and beckoned me forward with a "welcome back" grin. Working at the Met was another dream. The New York audiences would roar their approval for a particularly good Rose Adagio in Act I. From the stage the applause sounds like Niagara Falls.

My third lucky wish came true in October. Not altogether by coincidence, I was in Washington on Columbus Day weekend for the casting call for the Australian Ballet's production of *Don Quixote*. I was selected. Working with the Australian company was great fun. The dancers are young, warm, and friendly, and *Don Quixote* was fun too. This was the first time I had been in one of ballet's romantic comedies, and I learned that comedy is more challenging than drama.

Perhaps you are wondering—what is her day job? I have a doctorate in biological anthropology and work as an epidemiologist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. My job is monitoring HIV infection prevalence and incidence, risk behaviors, and their determinants among youth in the United States. It's not comedy at all. It's tragedy, and it's very challenging. I love my job and feel fortunate to do the work I do. But ballet provides a needed break.

And now perhaps you are also wondering—what about her mother? She's very well, and she came to see me perform with the Royal Ballet. We both remember my pledge at age 8 to dance with the Royal Ballet in *The Sleeping Beauty*. After the performance in 1994, we both laughed about it. The kind of laughing that makes you start to cry.

And what about you? What about that dream you put on the back shelf way back when? It's time to get it out. My mother will tell you, "Of course you will, dear."

LETTERS Continued from page 3

should have been accorded the status of a major college debate is simply scandalous. When will all of these hyper-sensitive minorities get the chips off their shoulders and grow up?

The reason American society is disintegrating today is not that the melting pot idea has been "discredited," as Jeffrey Lott's editorial suggests, but because multicultural pluralism is tearing it apart. No organized society or civilization can maintain itself when its members are giving their loyalty primarily to their own groups rather than to the larger nation of which they are a part.

Every society has the right to set the standards of morality and behavior by which it chooses to function, and mostly these come to it from its founders and its history. A minority cannot claim the right to insist on its own standards. It has, of course, the choice of resigning or otherwise exiting, as the Jewish students did, but it should not become an occasion for the whole of society, or the College, to take up every little protest and have to re-examine its standards.

While diversity is the spice of life, it must remain only the spice and not corrupt the whole stew. What is being advocated by liberals today, consciously or unconsciously, is a wholesale dismantling of American society and its standards in order to accommodate the whining of its minorities. I am sick and tired of it. I don't want to see American society dismantled and a patchwork of tribalistic loyalties erected in its place. The drift toward multicultural pluralism is a disaster that will benefit no one, least of all the minorities concerned.

MARTIN E.W. LUTHER '46
Minneapolis

Marissen's views are inconsistent

To the Editor:

I think Professor Michael Marissen's views on the *St. John Passion* have changed. He contends in the *Bulletin* that the students' objections to Bach's work come from "a culture of narcissism that makes no attempt to reconcile historical and modern concerns in interpreting classical works." He argues that the question of who killed Jesus was of no importance to Bach, and that it is a fundamental misunderstanding of this work to think that it is anti-Jewish.

However, in his 1993 article "Religious Aims in Mendelssohn's 1829 Berlin-Singakademie Performances of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*" (*The Musical Quarterly*, Winter 1993), Marissen wrote that Mendelssohn, a convert from Judaism to Lutheranism, probably chose to perform the *St. Matthew* rather than the *St. John Passion*, because within the *St. John*'s biblical narrative "those Jews who do not accept [Jesus] as king are seen as the ones essentially responsible for bringing about Christ's death." He wrote that the *St. Matthew Passion*, by contrast, sees Jesus' death as "brought on by the guilt of all," pointing out cuts Mendelssohn made in the *St. Matthew* and noting that many cuts from the biblical passages concern "negative character depictions of Jews."

Unfortunately, I think Professor Marissen was more respectful in discussing Mendelssohn's concerns with Bach than those of present day students. The *Bulletin* article would have been stronger had it enabled the concerned students to express their views of the College's handling of the controversy.

FRAN STIER
Swarthmore, Pa.

Wants to come back

To the Editor:

I have just read "Passionate About Bach," and nothing has ever made me wish I were a Swarthmore student *now* as did this article. How thrilled I am that this is happening at my beloved College. My husband often reiterates his belief that "the world is getting better"—and gets a lot of funny looks. But here is reinforcement as far as I'm concerned.

MARJORIE TODD SIMONDS '41
E. Gordon, Mich.

"This work is not *Mein Kampf*"

To the Editor:

The May issue of the *Bulletin* did indeed describe a controversy that was "classic Swarthmore"—fundamentally adolescent, political, hypocritical, and embarrassing.

If you are Jewish and are not comfortable with performing Bach's *St. John Passion*, the answer (obvious to a 6-year-old) is not to participate. However, at Swarthmore, students are encouraged to turn an essentially personal position into a political one. Write an article to *The Phoenix*, or stand up in front of 300 people and inform them of the grievous injury you are suffering. What is important is not to exercise any actual tolerance, i.e., to acknowledge that the beauty of Bach's music may be significant enough to justify putting up with an infinitely abstract, totally symbolic link between that music and a culture and time you find personally distasteful. What is "classic Swarthmore" is to politicize your little problem, and to see if you can, by deeming the entire work "offensive," whip the crowd into a frenzy.

This work not *Mein Kampf*. In the real world in which we all presumably live, a performance of it will have absolutely no effect at all on the fate of Jews, on the amount of anti-Semitism in the world, or on anyone's life. Yet in the name of "tolerance" and "open debate," J.S. Bach is tried two centuries after his death for what amounts to thought crime, and symbolism replaces reality. This is crazy and dangerous. It's unbelievable that nobody can step in and say, "This is silly." It is very upsetting to see art used, once again, as a political weapon, and particularly upsetting to see Swarthmore apparently encouraging such cynical, irresponsible distortions in such a self-congratulatory manner.

PETER DARLING '84
Bethlehem, Pa.
PeterDarl@aol.com

Persistent, obscene message

To the Editor:

I am a music lover and parent of Jo '72 and Louise '79, who are the objects of their parents' thinly disguised enormous pride. I am also a Christian of the holocaust generation and heir to the legacy of Inquisition and Pogrom, all traceable to the persistent, obscene message in words—written, spoken, and sung—that Jews are responsible for the crucifixion of Christ. I admire the courageous and perceptive young woman who said it truly, not just for herself but also for Christ: "I am a Jew and it directly offends me to sing the words which I know can become the basis for anti-Jewish thought."

JOSEPH FRANCIS
St. Petersburg, Fla.

Words pose a moral dilemma, no matter how great the art

To the Editor:

The students who refused to sing Bach's *St. John Passion* should be congratulated for their courage and perspicacity. That their stage seats were not left symbolically empty is cause for concern, not for rejoicing.

Professor Marissen says that "in context" the *St. John Passion* is not anti-Semitic and that Lutherans believed (believed in Bach's time?) that all humans are personally responsible for Christ's death. I am afraid that this is a great oversimplification.

Luther apparently thought that his reforms would bring the Jews to Jesus, and he wrote in praise of Jews. When the Jews did not convert, Luther wrote a vitriolic tract in which he urged that Jews and all evidence of their existence be destroyed. The seeds reaped by Hitler were sown by Luther and others before and after.

The "branch-root" idea expressed by Marissen is a fashionable ecumenical notion. It would be more accurate to say that Christianity is a separate tree grown from a seed that contains some Jewish genes, but which has other genes as well, implanted there by early Christians and later Luther, who misrepresented the Jewish religion. Some of these "bad genes" in the hybrid seed spawned anti-Semitism as part of a deliberate attempt to separate those who accepted Christ from those who did not and later to demonize those who did not.

Today's clergy—even the Pope—have acknowledged the historical contribution of Christianity to anti-Semitism. Reconciling a critical audience or performer with the words of the *Passion* is not simply a "pastoral matter," as Marissen puts it. In the post-Holocaust era, to believe that the words of the *Passion* are benign is, in my opinion, frankly foolish. Words pose a moral dilemma no matter how great the art in which they are used. Once you understand the words, they cannot be ignored. The problem does not disappear when one has a "proper" understanding of Bach "in context." What I read in the *Bulletin* was an attempt to clothe an anti-Semitic text in an erroneous, antiseptic robe of rationalization. How can Christians reconcile what they teach about love with Christian texts that fan the flames of hate? Should not these texts be abandoned in all their forms?

WILLIAM ROSENBLUM '57
Richmond, Va.

Professor Marissen replies

To the Editor:

I would like to distance myself from the views expressed in Peter Darling's and Martin E.W. Luther's letters.

Attentive reading will reveal that Mr. Rosenblum criticizes views I don't hold. He also reports on outdated research. Studies of Luther's entire output show his anti-Judaism to be stronger and more consistent than Rosenblum reports. Recent scholarship also shows, however, that in the post-Reformational Lutheranism of Bach's day these sentiments are qualitatively weaker. I will provide details in a forthcoming study.

My views on Bach's *St. John Passion* are consistent with the essay Ms. Stier mentions, and she has misidentified the target of my comments on cultural narcissism. They were aimed not at concerned Swarthmore students but at the majority of today's music lovers and scholars, who believe that great art transcends its contexts and connotes Pure Beauty, a cherished modern view uncritically projected onto history—we look at the past and see ourselves mirrored.

As for the essay, I was comparing Matthew's and John's biblical narratives. Bach includes those texts verbatim, and his commentaries on them, in the form of arias and chorales, dramatically affect their meanings. Since Mendelssohn had decided (for reasons unrelated to Judaism) not to perform Bach's arias, his abridgment projects new meanings. Shorn of commentary *Matthew* appears less problematic than *John*, and, to eliminate the possibility of misunderstanding in his particular performing context, Mendelssohn went so far as to excise biblical narrative as well. Furthermore, Bach's two passion settings were unknown in 1829 (Mendelssohn had to perform from music written out by hand). Today there is a host of printed editions, and the works have been performed thousands of times. Swarthmore performed the *St. John Passion*, with Bach's arias and chorales, in an educational context featuring lectures, seminars, symposia, and program notes. Providing no such context, Mendelssohn's situation was fundamentally different.

Anyone who was able to see how my colleagues and I spent the last semester couldn't suggest that any of us has greater respect for Mendelssohn than Swarthmore's concerned students. Incidentally, from what I know of him and them, I'd prefer the company of the students. Had they attended all the educational events and their open planning sessions, I suspect they wouldn't have taken so harsh a view of the College's handling of the controversy.

MICHAEL MARISSEN
Department of Music and Dance

Swarthmore's inspiration

To the Editor:

I never graduated from Swarthmore. After two attempts, my marks just weren't high enough. It has taken years to get over my feelings of embarrassment and disappointment, but the time I spent at the College was one of the highlights of my life. I'll list a few of the reasons:

•I learned about academic excellence in Professor Blackburn's English lectures and Professor Euwema's physics classes.

•I learned about ethics. Mr. Euwema spent many hours patiently working with me until I passed with a D. I offered money for his time, but he said that to accept would be unethical.

•I met people who believe that truth and right are not just abstract concepts. When some students were jailed in a civil rights demonstration, the notice on the board said, "Students arrested still have to hand in the essay assigned last week."

•I learned warmth and friendship. My class contained people destined for the top of their fields, but I never felt anyone was a snob. To have more talent and drive than others, but not to rub it in, is terribly important.

I have taught high school for 26 years, including directing more than 50 school musicals and jazz choirs. Where does the inspiration come from? You guessed it.

P.S. I'd love to hear from classmates.

TED DUFF '66
Box 933
Orillia, Ont.

The Conjurers

Continued from page 15

and I teach a course on the relationship between dialogue in fiction and dialogue in real life."

Realism and fantasy exist alongside each other in Napoli's novels *Soccer Shock* and *Shark Shock*, which center on a boy who talks to his freckles—and whose freckles talk back. Napoli's own childhood experiences inspired the tale. "I was raised a Catholic," she says, "and I remember adoring the catechism because it was full of answers. And my favorite was the question and answer: 'Where is God?'—'God is everywhere.' I would talk to sticks, I would talk to my fingers, I would talk to anything, because God might be there."

In fact, like Sandra Darling, Napoli enters the fantasy world of children and does not trivialize it. "I'm hoping to reach the child who doesn't easily see the line between fantasy and reality and for whom that line isn't yet really important," she says. "As a child I took everything equally seriously, and so when I write I also try to take everything equally seriously."

One senses that Donna Jo Napoli is still deeply connected to the world of childhood. I can sense a similar kind of connection in the fiction of Lisa Wright Eisenberg '71, who writes realistic novels that focus on adventure and family life. She writes seriously and compassionately about such childhood experiences as being afraid that a birthday party will be spoiled or what it's like to be the youngest child.

"I find story ideas in the tiny details of the ordinary but fascinating life of the child I once was," Eisenberg is quoted as saying in a flyer for the Institute of Children's Literature, for which she works as an instructor. "My own kids help me remember what it was like, but I don't really need them to—because basically the child is still alive and well inside of me."

Eisenberg has written four series of novels for children and teenagers, in addition to her humor books for children. The first was a set of mysteries featuring detective Laura Brewster. The books were written using a special word list and were aimed at teenagers and young adults with reading problems. A similar set of books, the South City Cop series, followed.

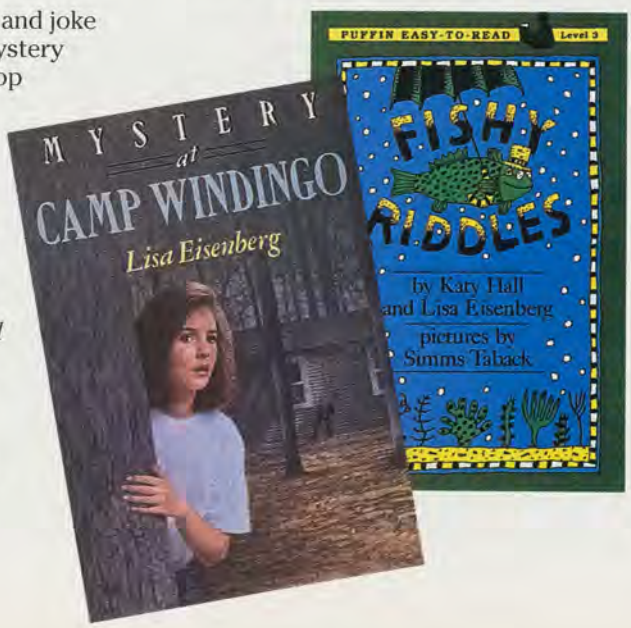
For children ages 8 to 12, she has written three books featuring teenage detective Kate Clancy and three about fourth-grader Lexie Nielsen. Eisenberg says: "I love writing for that age group. It's what they call the golden age of reading because it's when kids are first able to read novels independently. It's a wonderful opportunity for humor, because they haven't become as jaded as they get in middle school."

Eisenberg first started writing for children at Scholastic Books, where she took a job as an editorial assistant in 1974. Soon she was working as assistant editor and writer for *Sprint* magazine, one of their publications for children. She wrote just about anything the magazine needed—stories, plays, nonfiction articles, sports stories, math activities, and puzzles. After a few more years and a couple more jobs in children's publishing, she turned to freelance writing.

What makes a good novel for children? Eisenberg says: "I think that really good stories, both for adults and for kids, start with interesting characters. A lot of people start with a situation first, but in fact it's usually more interesting to see how a certain type of kid reacts in a given situation. Make your main character interesting and you've basically got half your job done."

But no character is going to interest every reader, she realizes. In her own family, one daughter was very fond of Eisenberg's mystery series, while the other liked the Lexie stories. "One thing I've come to terms with is that my books are not for every

Lisa Wright Eisenberg '71
Formerly: writer and editor at Scholastic Books, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, and Bowmar/Noble
Also: instructor for the Institute of Children's Literature in Connecticut and in the Cayuga Heights (N.Y.) Elementary School Enrichment Program
Children's books published: 25 to 30
First book: *Chicken Jokes and Puzzles*, 1976: "This is a little embarrassing, but it's funny. I was working on some very boring workbooks for a language arts program, and we were writing jokes to go on the bottom of the pages to liven them up. I kept stumbling on jokes about chickens and realized that it was a very rich subject."
Some other books: 10 riddle and joke books, the Laura Brewster mystery series, 1977; the South City Cop series, 1984; *Mystery at Snowshoe Mountain Lodge*, 1987; *Mystery at Bluff Point Dunes*, 1989; *Leave It to Lexie*, 1989; *Mystery at Camp Windingo*, 1991; *Happy Birthday, Lexie*, 1991; *Story of Sitting Bull*, 1991; *Lexie on Her Own*, 1992; *The Camp Survival Handbook*, 1995
Working on: *My Partner, the Ghost*, a mystery novel
Family: Husband Theodore Eisenberg '69 and three children, ages 6 to 15
Home: Ithaca, N.Y.



So you want to write a children's book....

It's not that easy to succeed in the children's book business, and getting started is particularly difficult. Of the five authors I spoke with, only Donna Jo Napoli published her first book without previously working in a job related to children's book publishing—and it took her 14 years. Before publishing children's books, Peggy Thomson was a freelance writer on children's subjects, Arielle Olson was a children's book reviewer and manuscript reader and editor, and Lisa Eisenberg wrote and edited children's magazines. And Sandra Darling *owned* the firm that first published her work.

"I don't think any other publisher would have taken *Good Dog, Carl*," Darling says now. "They wouldn't have dared. For one thing, it's nearly wordless, which wasn't done at the time at all. Second, in this politically correct and socially self-conscious age, they wouldn't have touched a book about a baby being left alone with a dog. It never occurred to me to think about that, and clearly the public isn't stopped by any such thing, since the books have turned out to be so popular."

ILLUSTRATION BY SANDRA DARLING '63 FROM *CARL GOES TO DAYCARE* ©1993

It's easy to see why most children's book authors don't make it by contributing manuscripts to the slush pile. "My editor at Little Brown says that they get one or two thousand unagented manuscripts over the transom every year," says Lisa Eisenberg. "And it's a lucky year for new authors if one or two of them get published."

And it's getting harder. Donna Jo Napoli says: "Dutton, when they first published *The Prince of the Pond* in 1992, got about 2,000 unsolicited manuscripts for children's books a year, and they used to publish about 60 titles a year. Now they're cutting back to around 40 or 45, and they're getting even more submissions." It's especially hard to sell a picture book, Napoli says, because they make up the vast majority of unsolicited manuscripts.

Lisa Eisenberg gives a couple of reasons that the current publishing climate is not as sunny as it was even 10 years ago: "For one thing, the government is not giving libraries and schools as much money to buy books. Second, series like the Babysitters Club or Goosebumps have come to dominate the market. So trying to sell a very good individual book is getting harder and harder." Arielle Olson adds: "Publishers are merging their children's book departments, and in the process editors are displaced and lists are cut, sometimes drastically."

Even when a writer beats the odds and gets published, he or she is not likely to get rich. "I could not support myself writing fiction right now, and I have seven books out," says Donna Jo Napoli. "You make very little money. I think I make 16 cents from every paperback book I sell, so figure how many books I have to sell to buy a banana. That's how it works."

Sandra Darling explains: "It's almost impossible to support yourself as a children's writer or illustrator—the numbers aren't great enough. A very good seller is 20,000. Maybe you get a dollar for every book that's sold, and that's only if you don't have to share your royalty with an illustrator. And it's hard to do two books a year if you're an illustrator. So you're not going to support a family on that."

The biggest problem, Lisa Eisenberg says, is that a writer's income is so uncertain: "You might have one year where you're fine, and then the next year you might be earning $10,000 or less."

So why write children's books? Despite the problems of getting published and making a living, these writers continue to devote their talent and their energy to this craft. "Writing and illustrating children's books is not lucrative, but it's fun and people like to do it," says Sandra Darling. "I think that's one of the reasons that the children's book market has flourished—a lot of people have poured themselves into it and a lot of good work has been done." Or perhaps Donna Jo Napoli explains it best: "When you're a writer, you write."

—*R.A.*

child," she says. "In a way that gives me some freedom—I can write the kind of book I would have liked to read myself when I was a kid."

Writing Nonfiction

What do the Hope diamond, Allende meteorites, and a house mouse mandible have in common? They are all displayed at the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History and featured in the book *Auks, Rocks, and the Odd Dinosaur* by Peggy Bebié Thomson '43.

"I wished so much to show how a bone, a bird, a boat, or a stone holds a story for those who find the code to read it," Thomson wrote after the book, written for children ages 8 to 12, was published. The stories of about 20 of the museum's objects (and a guard dog, Max) appear in the book, one of several Thomson has written about what happens behind the scenes at public institutions like museums and zoos.

For the zoo book, I wanted each chapter to be about a different animal. But it would have been neater if the entire book had been about how to give an elephant a bath.

—Peggy Thomson '43

After years of freelance writing, often on subjects related to children and creative classrooms, Thomson began writing nonfiction books for children about 20 years ago. "I write about what interests me and what I'd like to know about," she says. "I assume that kids would like to know too. I just try to be a little more clear and a little more compact than when writing for adults."

Thomson seems to have endless curiosity about things and people. "Researching books is a chance to talk to people and to listen, not to say eavesdrop, and just to watch," she says. "In a lot of my writing I try to show that the world is full of interesting people and interesting things. How things are made is vastly interesting. Life is interesting."

Spaghetti is the subject of one of Thomson's books, *Siggy's Spaghetti Works*. "To learn how spaghetti is made, I went to a spaghetti factory in Massachusetts and watched tons of spaghetti pouring out of the machines and being packaged up and carried on conveyor belts," she says. She also did historical research for the book, finding, for example, that Thomas Jefferson was the first president to serve pasta in the White House.

Her research for *Keepers and Creatures at the National Zoo* included going back again and again to the zoo to watch elephants getting a bath, orangutans learning sign language, and birds getting their breakfast. She researched the book *City Kids in China* during a trip to Changsha, where her China-born husband, John '43, joined her for four days. For *Katie Henio, Navajo Sheepherder*, she spent time on a Navajo reservation in New Mexico.

But after all that watching and learning comes the writing: "For me the hard part is zeroing in on a narrow enough subject, so that I have room to go into details and be playful about it. That's a hard lesson to learn. For the zoo book, I wanted each chapter to be about a different animal. But when I finished the book, I thought that it would have been neater if the whole book had been about how to give an elephant a bath."

Her goal in writing for children? "I just want to make my books interesting and fun and readable. I don't particularly intend to be instructional," she says.

Fun is also the focus of Lisa Eisenberg's humor books. They have titles like *101 Ghost Jokes*, *The Camp Survival Handbook*, and *Buggy Riddles*, and Eisenberg estimates that around a million copies of some of the older riddle books have been sold. The books feature such gems as: "What do spiders like with their hamburgers? French flies!"

Eisenberg writes the riddle books with her friend Katy Hall, with whom she created a riddle-making system:

Peggy Bebié Thomson '43
Formerly: researcher at *Life* magazine, contributor to the *Washington Post* magazine, *Smithsonian*, *American Education*, and many other publications
Children's books published: seven
First book: *On Reading Palms*, 1974: "It's a skeptic's look at whether you can infer anything about people's characters from their hands. Prentice Hall gave me the assignment, and I thought it was goofy and fairly inappropriate, but it started me in a happy direction."
Other books: *Museum People: Collectors and Keepers at the Smithsonian*, 1979; *Auks, Rocks, and the Odd Dinosaur: Inside Stories from the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History*, 1985; *Keepers and Creatures at the National Zoo*, 1988; *City Kids in China*, 1991; *Siggy's Spaghetti Works*, 1993; *Katie Henio, Navajo Sheepherder*, 1995
Coming out: *When Great-Aunt Isabel Comes to Visit* (fiction picture book) and *Hank's Bats and Balls* (no date yet from publisher)
Working on: *Travis and His Dog Kosmic* (about a disabled boy and his dog) and *Inside Out* (behind the scenes at the National Gallery)
Family: Husband John Thomson '43, three grown children, five grandchildren
Home: Chevy Chase, Md.

"You pick a subject, like snakes, and then you write down everything you can think of that has to do with snakes–hiss, scales, kinds of snakes, what snakes eat. Then you ask yourself, 'What sounds like hiss?' Hiss sounds like 'hisstory' or 'hissterical,' and that's your punch line. You just have to think up a silly question that would lead to that answer."

Primarily these books are "just silly," Eisenberg says, but not completely. "When I say I'm a writer and then tell people about the riddle books, they kind of roll their eyes, but in fact you can do a lot with riddles. I've gone to grade schools and taught kids our riddle-making system, and they learn a lot about word play and what makes humor. So it's not quite as silly as it sounds."

Kids love the riddle books. I know because my 3-year-old laughs uproariously at *Buggy Riddles*, and she can't understand more than one in 10 of them. "Kids have to be in about first grade to really get the jokes," Lisa Eisenberg says. "But younger kids like them anyway." And Eisenberg seems to laugh right along with them.

What is it like to live in the world of children? I think these writers gave me some idea. There's humor there and curiosity about the world outside. There's fantasy and there's fairy-tale magic. It's a world where a baby can ride on a dog and where it's a tragedy if a birthday party fails. A few adults can still visit there, among them these five authors, who conjure out of their creativity and curiosity books that expand a child's world. ■

Rebecca Alm is a freelance writer. This is her sixth feature for the Bulletin.

I'LL BUILD MY **HOUSE OF STRAW**

Continued from page 19

Several features still remain to be installed. Photovoltaic cells on the roof will produce electricity from sunlight. Light and heat will be provided not only by large south-facing windows but also by special "heat-trapping" skylights made of silvered pipe with convex glass hemispheres at each end. "Drawbridge"-style window shutters lined with silvered foam will reflect light into the house when lowered and will maintain heat inside when raised. Water will be supplied to the house from an outdoor cistern composed of two stacked 80-gallon water-heater tanks. The bathroom will include a waterless composting toilet. And there are plans for an indoor "wetland," where gray water (from sinks and showers) will percolate through a bed of aquatic plants such as reeds and cattails. The waste will be soaked up and the clean water returned to the system pure enough to drink.

The group faced many challenges. An over-ambitious construction schedule could not be maintained by the group of only a dozen or so students. Everbach estimates that he did between 10 and 20 percent of the total work himself. The house remained without a roof throughout the winter and had to be protected by tarpaulins. Putting them up was an adventure in itself, said Brian Roche '95: "Every time we started to put them on, a Nor'easter would blow up. It was like setting a huge sail—and the wind would pull it right off." The delay in roofing caused some of the straw to become wet and rot, and although bales can be replaced, the procedure is still time-consuming. Birds nested in the walls; the weight of the roof caused the walls to bulge and the stucco to crack in one spot; and the house became an easy target for vandals—windows were broken, and a hole was found in one exterior wall, believed

to be the result of a "misaimed" shot put from the nearby track.

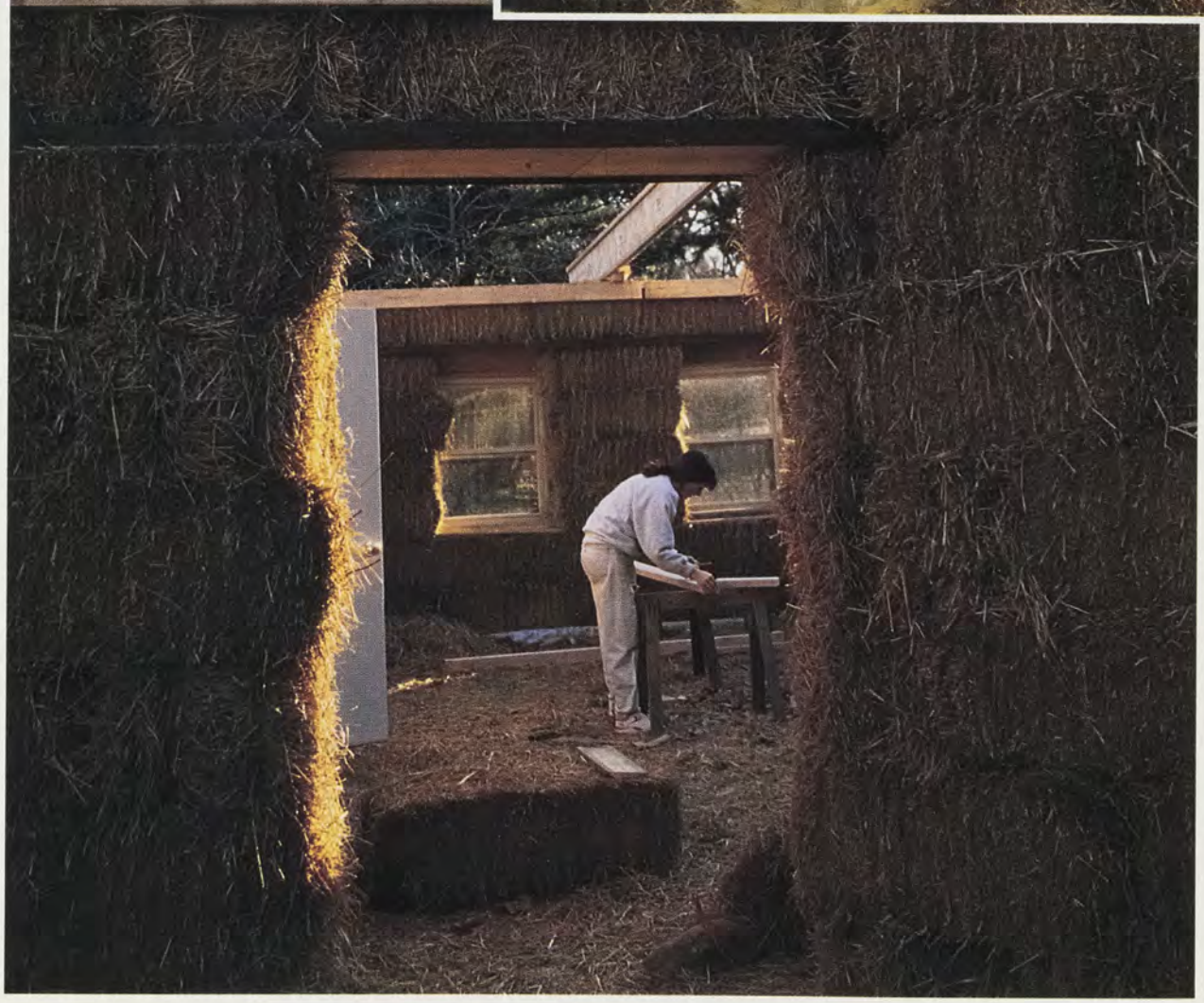
Scarcity of funds is a serious obstacle to the house's future. Until now the project has been financed solely by money from a grant Everbach received from the Educational Foundation of America to develop a course called "Swarthmore and the Biosphere"—which has since become part of the curriculum. With this money spent "pretty much down to zero," he is now using research support from the College, has hired other students to help, and has turned the house into an extracurricular research project. This summer Eric Studer '97 supervised a crew of high school students who completed the exterior of the house and began interior work. By the end of summer, Everbach predicted, "the house will look nice."

Everbach is currently investigating new sources

"I really enjoyed the technical, concrete nature of it."

The ambitious construction schedule could not be maintained by the seminar students, so Everbach has turned the house into an extracurricular research project. Though the builders would have preferred a thatch roof, they settled on pressboard made from waste wood chips. Recycled newspaper cellulose was blown in as roof insulation.

Local building codes will prohibit habitation of the house—except by the birds that have nested in its walls. But students will measure and analyze how the structure holds up in the wet northeastern climate. Carr Everbach even hopes to invite Lakota-Sioux elders to visit the project.



of funding, not only to put the finishing touches to the house itself, but also to buy equipment to collect data on the structure's durability. One of the main reasons for building it, he emphasized, is to carry out analyses of how well such a house holds up in a northeastern climate. Temperature and humidity will be measured by placing sensors in the walls, and any qualitative changes that occur will be noted. Everbach would also like to hear the opinion of the Lakota-Sioux on the house and is hoping to invite some of the tribal elders to view it.

Although local building codes prohibit habitation of the house because of its use of nonstandard building material, as a research project it is a tremendous breeding ground for ideas on environmental living. And, with an eye to its acceptance as a form of dwelling in the future, Everbach claims, "It is cheap and relatively easy to construct." When one considers that it costs $100 per square foot to build a conventional single-family home, and that a straw-bale house costs $15-$20 per square foot, the financial appeal is obvious.

For the students the project appears to have meant considerably more than just learning how to build a house of straw. Brian Roche calls it "a very valuable experience for me because it offered a different way of knowing my classmates—better than if I'd seen them in class. And it taught me how to compromise." And for political science major Michelle Hacker '95, building a house compared very favorably to studying abstract political theories: "I really enjoyed the technical, concrete nature of it—that you actually saw what you were doing, and it had a purpose. And the best part is knowing that, once the data is published, something we've done may help somebody, somewhere, in the future."

And if that's not enough to make you play your fiddle and dance a jig ... ■

Letting go

Editor's Note: *Nothing is harder than letting our children grow up. Last September 1 as I was driving home from Swarthmore, I heard Donna Damico Mayer on NPR's* All Things Considered, *talking about the pain of taking her son to college. And when, at the end of the piece, I learned that the college in question was Swarthmore, I knew that readers of the* Bulletin *would be touched by her story. Noah Adams introduced the piece and later spoke with Charlie Mayer '98.*

Noah Adams: In 1973, many Septembers ago, Howard Nemerov wrote "September, The First Day of School." The poem begins, "My child and I hold hands on the way to school. And when I leave him at the first-grade door, he cries a little, but is brave. He does let go. My selfish tears remind me how I cried before that door a life ago. I may have had a hard time letting go."

The lump in the throat that comes from watching your child disappear behind that first-grade door is not the last lump in the throat that a parent feels. Donna Damico Mayer has just gone through it again.

Donna Damico Mayer: In the fall of 1982, when my firstborn boarded the school bus for the first grade, I dissolved into tears. My husband looked on in total bewilderment. "It's the beginning of the end," I sobbed, "today first grade, tomorrow college."

"No," he said, "tomorrow he will still be in first grade, and we've got 12 years to go." This week Charlie left for college and my husband was wrong—it was just yesterday that he got on the bus for first grade. The years, it seems, have flown by. We have had some slow times, of course, these last 18 years, particularly the first five. In those days it would sometimes take me 1½ hours to get two kids dressed, out the door, and into car seats. I can remember getting the last boot on foot No. 4, and then realizing that in the meantime foot No. 1 had removed its boot. Life was structured then.

Looking back, I'm not sure if I believed it would ever end. I knew it in my head, but never in my gut. All this summer I've tried to picture myself driving Charlie to college. I could see the four of us chugging up I-95, but the image ends there. I could never picture the three of us coming back without him.

COURTESY DONNA DAMICO MAYER

"Charlie is not the little round-faced boy on the bus to first grade. He's a man now on his way out into the world."

It's not like we weren't preparing all year long. Charlie's senior year was a constant reminder of his imminent departure—campus visits, the SATs, application deadlines, essays, interviews, mood swings, and waiting, endless waiting.

Last fall I set out thinking I would be wise, supportive, and calm, and that I would learn a lot to pass on to friends with younger children. Well, here's what I learned: The whole experience is hard on everybody, it takes over the entire family's psyche, and in the end you have to say goodbye, ready or not.

We managed to survive the school year and headed toward summer knowing that we were facing issues centered around our son's need for independence and the need to separate as painlessly as possibly. I, of course, wanted everyone to be cozy and together and was silently horrified that neither one of our children chose to spend much time with us this summer.

> *"It's the beginning of the end," I sobbed, "today first grade, tomorrow college."*

The times we were a foursome were generally tense. Charlie fought with his father over the smallest things. He guarded his privacy with a new-found vigilance. He ignored me and tormented his younger brother a little less, which, paradoxically, was somewhat of a loss for this brother, who says, "I don't miss him. I miss the idea of him."

He was checking out, and to me it felt too slow and too fast all at once. And frankly, I feel gypped. I feel like I'm being handed early retirement from a job I liked. Why are there countless books on childbirth, breastfeeding, and child development, and a dearth of material on letting go?

My next-door neighbor, who is only a few years younger than me and the mother of two small children, said wistfully, "Sounds good to me. You're gonna get your life back."

"But I like this life," I thought. Then there is my 38-year-old sister-in-law and her very fussy infant daughter. She was weighing the advantages and disadvantages of having a second child quickly, and I blurted out, "Oh, you don't want to have them only one year apart because then they'll leave for college back-to-back." The look in her eyes made me know she would welcome a college that would take her 3-month-old now.

Perhaps the best advice came from a friend at work who said to me in early summer, "Just pretend it's not happening." So that's what I did. Then toward mid-August I began to unravel. I began telling store clerks and gas station attendants, "My son is going to

college." I divided my whole world, friends and strangers alike, into two camps—those who looked potentially tearful at my pronouncement and those who didn't. Some of my dearest friends have told me in one way or another to get over it.

I've decided these last few months are like the final half hour at work each day. I am a nurse on an acute psychiatric floor and there's never a day that I don't check and double check my worksheet and the medication records as I get ready to leave. As I go down on the elevator, I'm always wondering if there's something I've left undone or forgotten to pass on to the next shift, and I'm checking my pockets to make sure I'm not taking the narcotic keys home with me. I have that feeling now, the feeling of unfinished business. Have I left something out of my mothering? How can I squeeze in some last-minute words of wisdom and important anecdotal information about life, and how do I let him know how much I love him?

It's time. I bought the extra-tall sheets, the stamps, detergent, toothpaste. I've given all the unsolicited advice I have to give. Now I've got to believe in the last 18 years. Charlie is not the little round-faced boy on the bus to first grade. He's a man now on his way out into the world.

Noah Adams: Donna Damico Mayer lives in Takoma Park, Maryland, which she found out this weekend is exactly 128 miles from Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. Her son Charlie worked with us here at *All Things Considered* for the past year, and today he had his first class at Swarthmore College. Charlie, how'd it go?

Charlie Mayer: Well, I was excited and happy to talk to you, and now I'm a little teary-eyed after hearing my mother. I wish that I had had a chance to have this conversation with her before I left. Maybe if she had read me that or told me some of the ideas that were in it, maybe we could have cried together. She cried a lot and I didn't, and now I'm sort of feeling guilty that we didn't have the chance to share that one last ... grieving.

Adams: That moment of leaving, when she took you to Swarthmore, do you recall that as a moment of significance, or were you just sort of anxious to have her go so you could go ahead with college?

Mayer: I felt like I couldn't get on with my life, with my college education, until they left. And I know my friends felt the same way. While the parents were still here, they broke us up. Some deans and the president talked to the parents, and some other deans talked to us at the same time. And the deans who were speaking with us said, "Well, we have to move on now. We have to invite your parents to leave." And spontaneous applause rocked the hall.

Adams: It would have been kind of tough, though, to have had a real serious talk all the way up to Swarthmore.

Mayer: It would have been difficult because my father was driving like a maniac and my mother was just hysterical. We should have had this maybe a week ago. But there were so many things to take care of that there wasn't enough time to just sit down in the living room or the kitchen and have a normal conversation, which we can do. We're certainly capable of it, but the time just wasn't there.... ■

September, The First Day of School

My child and I hold hands on the way to school,
And when I leave him at the first-grade door
He cries a little but is brave; he does
Let go. My selfish tears remind me how
I cried before that door a life ago.
I may have had a hard time letting go.

Each fall the children must endure together
What every child also endures alone:
Learning the alphabet, the integers,
Three dozen bits and pieces of a stuff
So arbitrary, so peremptory,
That worlds invisible and visible

Bow down before it, as in Joseph's dream
The sheaves bowed down and then the
stars bowed down
Before the dreaming of a little boy.
That dream got him such hatred of his brothers
As cost the greater part of life to mend.
And yet great kindness came of it in the end.

A school is where they grind the grain of thought,
And grind the children who must mind the thought.
It may be those two grindings are but one,
As from the alphabet comes Shakespeare's Plays,
As from the integers comes Euler's Law,
As from the whole, inseparably, the lives,

The shrunken lives that have not been set free
By law or by poetic phantasy.
But may they be. My child has disappeared
Behind the schoolroom door. And should I live
To see his coming forth, a life away,
I know my hope, but do not know its form

Nor hope to know it. May the fathers he finds
Among his teachers have a care of him
More than his father could. How that will look
I do not know, I do not need to know.
Even our tears belong to ritual.
But may great kindness come of it in the end.

—Howard Nemerov

TERRY WILD PHOTO

Are America's Values Changing?

This is the provocative theme of the Saturday morning forum at Fall Weekend '95. It will feature one of our most distinguished alumni, Christopher F. Edley, Jr. '73, a professor at Harvard Law School and former special counsel to President Clinton. Swarthmore faculty members will join him in discussing whether our nation is experiencing a fundamental shift in what most citizens consider essential principles and priorities.

How significant are changes in Congress and the Supreme Court? Do the media accurately reflect current trends? Can we identify a national consensus as we reach the end of this century? Alumni, parents, and friends of the College are invited to help explore these timely issues.

Plan to join us also for other Fall Weekend and Homecoming events, from sports to performances and exhibits. There's no more stimulating way to welcome autumn! You can get details from the Alumni Office at (610) 328-8402, or reach us on line at alumni@swarthmore.edu.

Join us for Fall Weekend at Swarthmore

October 6–8

Special Fall Weekend Attraction

THE CAPITOL STEPS

bring their unique musical satire to campus

Friday evening, October 6